Department of Defense

Captioning Style Guide

Oct. 28, 2013

(Supersedes version of March 30, 2013)

ASD(PA)

SUBJECT: DoD Captioning Style Guide

References: (a) DoD Instruction 5040.02, *Visual Information (VI)*, Oct. 27, 2011

(b) *The Associated Press Stylebook,* Current Edition

PURPOSE

The Style Guide provides a standard method of writing captions for DoD imagery. This publication will help all personnel involved in the creation of official DoD imagery to write and edit captions that are accurate, clear, concise and meet DoD style standards.

This publication is written for all producers, editors and users of visual information (VI). It demonstrates how to address military terms describing Service members, equipment, places and entities recorded by DoD camera operators, created by DoD graphic artists, or written about by DoD journalists. The DoD Captioning Style Guide is designed to supplement *The Associated Press Stylebook* (reference b) and pertains specifically to DoD-specific issues not addressed by the AP. *The Associated Press Stylebook* remains the primary style reference for caption writers.

This publication applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities and all other organizational entities covered within the parameters of DoDI 5040.02.

DoD Instruction 5040.02: http://www.defenseimagery.mil/learning/vipolicy/dodi.html

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• military unit names (pages 12-14):
        • Adds two more examples of unit identification
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Chapter 2, Still and motion imagery metadata:
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Chapter 4, References:
• Table 1, Military rank abbreviations: More information on USN personnel
• Table 3, Selected military aircraft and vehicles: Several new aircraft listed
• Table 4, Selected weapons: Several new entries along with common variants
• Table 6, Afghan provinces: Corrected AP spelling on several place names
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Chapter 5, Captioning basics:
• Expanded information on proper photo credits, with examples
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Chapter 9, Additional resources:
• Updates to various web reference URLs

Chapter 1
Matters of style

This chapter provides the correct style for commonly misspelled or otherwise misused items within DoD captions. The list is by no means comprehensive; if a term does not appear below, refer to *The Associated Press Stylebook* or *Webster's New World College Dictionary* for the appropriate style and spelling, the *National Geographic Atlas of the World* for place names, or to the Service-specific fact sheets for the correct spelling of aircraft, vehicles and equipment (see Chapter 9, Additional resources, on page 47).

abbreviations Only use abbreviations on second reference; the abbreviation must be in parentheses after the first reference. Note: The only exceptions to this are Navy and Marine Corps aviation squadrons (see page 15), NATO, SEAL, USO and abbreviations covered in the AP Stylebook.

Afghan cities See Table 6, Afghan provinces, on page 27 for the proper spelling for several major cities in Afghanistan.

all hands/all-hands Two words as a noun: *The commanding officer called all hands to the meeting.* Hyphenate as an adjective/compound modifier: *The Sailors attended the all-hands call.*

alongside One word.

American flag, U.S. flag Note *flag* is lowercase.

amphibious assault ship Do not capitalize, even when referring to a specific ship. For example: *U.S. Sailors and Marines man the rails of the amphibious assault ship USS Nassau (LHA 4).*

Anzac Capitalize, but do not use all caps. *Anzac* stands for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps of World War I. Anzac Day is celebrated annually by both nations April 25; U.S. Service members are often present at these celebrations.

aqueous film-forming foam *AFFF* is acceptable on second reference.

Arabian Gulf Do not use. See **Persian Gulf**.

Arabic names Follow AP style for Arabic names.

assault amphibian battalion Lowercase unless used in a unit name.

assault amphibious vehicle The Marine Corps' AAV-7A1 tracked vehicle. Not *amphibious assault vehicle*. Do not confuse with amphibious assault ships.

assistant secretary Capitalize before a name as part of a title; use lowercase when the title appears after the name.

back blast Two words.

Bambi bucket Do not use. See **helicopter bucket**.

battalion landing team In unit names, capitalize it, followed by a comma and the unit's full name.

> *U.S. Marines with the Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment storm a beach Jan. 23, 2012, as part of an exercise in Thailand.*

bounding overwatch Jargon. Use *maneuver* or another synonym.

breech/breach *Breech* refers to the part of an artillery piece where rounds are loaded. The verb *breach* means to penetrate an obstacle or defense; as a noun, *breach* is the hole in a defense.

casualty evacuation *CASEVAC* is acceptable on second reference.

cavalry Use lowercase unless it is part of a unit name. Do not confuse with *Calvary*, which is a religious term.

change of command ceremony Do not hyphenate the compound adjective.

Civil Air Patrol The civilian volunteer auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, best known for search and rescue, disaster relief and cadet programs. Although Civil Air Patrol members work closely with the Air Force and they hold rank within Civil Air Patrol, they are not Airmen. *CAP* is acceptable on second reference.

civilian titles Do not use courtesy titles such *Mr., Mrs., Miss,* or *Ms.* unless requested by the named person. Other formal titles such as *Dr., Sen.* or *Gov.* should be used where applicable. Do not use such titles on second reference unless necessary to differentiate two people with the same last name.

Colombia/Columbia The South American country is spelled *Colombia*, and the adjective is *Colombian. Columbia* is the proper spelling for the university, the former space shuttle and several U.S. cities and private-sector organizations.

colors When referring to the flag of the United States, *American flag* or *U.S. flag* are the preferred styles. Do not use in reference to the flags of other nations. Acceptable when referring to unit flags and guidons. For example: *The battalion colors were furled during a transfer of authority ceremony.*

combined Per Joint Publication 1-02: A term identifying two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies operating together. See **joint**.

commandant A job title for the top four-star officer of the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Coast Guard; also used to describe the commanding personnel of academies and other military institutions. Only capitalize when used in the official job title before the person's name.

> *U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. John Smith shakes hands with Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos at the Pentagon in Arlington, Va., June 5, 2012.*

> *U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Rory Malloy, left, the commandant of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, shakes hands with a recent graduate of the academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, Sept. 12, 2012.*

commander in chief Do not hyphenate; use lowercase unless it appears before a name.

commands Write out the full name of all U.S. military commands on first reference; acronyms are acceptable on second reference.

Style Check: Unified Combatant Commands

Regional commands:

U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM)
U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM)
U.S. European Command (USEUCOM)
U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM)
U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM)
U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM)

Functional commands:

U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)
U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM)
U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM)

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counter improvised explosive device Do not hyphenate or capitalize. *Counter IED* is acceptable on second reference.

contingency operating base Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location. *COB* is acceptable on second reference.

> *U.S. Marines set up checkpoints outside the contingency operating base.*

> *U.S. Marines set up checkpoints outside Contingency Operating Base Speicher.*

crew member Two words. For example: *The crew members prepare for takeoff.*

decommissioned ships Write as you would an active vessel, but make it clear the vessel is no longer in service. See **museum ships**.

> *The decommissioned aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) will remain in the Ready Reserve Fleet until 2015.*

demining No hyphen.

Department of Defense On second reference, use the acronym *DoD*.

dignified transfer Never a *dignified transfer ceremony*. Do not capitalize. For example: "... the dignified transfer of fallen Service members ..." or "... dignified transfer operations at Dover Air Force Base ..." or "... during the dignified transfer of his/her remains at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan ..."

distinguished transfer Do not use.

district Follow the AP style for *province*.

exercises Capitalize uniquely named exercises, but only capitalize the descriptive word *exercise* if it is part of the official title of the exercise. Do not capitalize generic descriptors for exercises (e.g., operational readiness exercise, joint task force exercise, composite training unit exercise).

female engagement team Do not capitalize unless writing about a specific team.

> *U.S. Marines with a female engagement team assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force speak to Iraqi women during a cordon and search operation in Fallujah, Iraq, May 10, 2010.*

> *U.S. Marines with Female Engagement Team 2, I Marine Expeditionary Force speak to Iraqi women during a cordon and search operation in Fallujah, Iraq, May 10, 2010.*

firefighter One word.

fireman In the Navy, a Sailor specifically trained in an engineering or hull repair rating. While damage control is among the fireman ratings, the term *fireman* is not to be confused with *firefighter*. If the term is used as a part of a named individual's rank or rating, it is capitalized.

flight line Two words.

foreign services Capitalize formal names of foreign services (e.g., Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, Afghan National Army, Russian Ground Forces). Informal or generic names (e.g., Japanese navy, Afghan army, Russian army) are lowercase. Do not use the foreign-language name for a service (i.e., don't use *Armada de Mexico* for the Mexican navy).

foreign service members Do not capitalize the words *soldier*, *sailor*, *airman*, *marine* or *coast guardsman* when referring to foreign service

members. If a foreign service member's rank corresponds to a U.S. rank, use AP style. If not, spell out the rank (e.g., *Commodore, Field Marshal*.)

forward operating base Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location. *FOB* is acceptable on second reference.

> *U.S. Marines set up checkpoints outside the forward operating base.*

> *U.S. Marines set up checkpoints outside Forward Operating Base Warrior.*

from Do not use *from* to describe a Service member's affiliation with a military unit. Use *with*, *assigned to* or *attached to*. The term *from* implies hometown or native country.

> *U.S. Army Spc. Joe Snuffy is an infantryman assigned to the 1st Battalion, 333rd Infantry Regiment.*

> *U.S. Marines with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit participate in a training exercise.*

gay marriage See **same-sex marriage**.

groundbreaking One word.

guided missile No hyphen in all uses.

guidon Note spelling. A *guidon* is a pennant, or small flag, carried as the standard of a smaller (company- or platoon-sized) military unit. Do not confuse a guidon with a larger unit's flag.

hangar Aircraft are kept in a hangar, not a hanger.

-hawk helicopters Note exact spelling, spacing and capitalization: UH-60 Black Hawk, HH-60 Pave Hawk, VH-60 White Hawk, SH-60 Seahawk, MH-60 Seahawk, HH-60 Jayhawk. Note: "Knighthawk" is not the proper name for the MH-60 Seahawk. See Table 3, Military aircraft and vehicles, on page 24.

helicopter bucket Lowercase. Do not use *Bambi bucket*, as that is a specific brand name.

Hesco barrier Use *barrier* or *fortification*, unless the item in question can be identified as having been made by Hesco.

High Mobility Artillery Rocket System Capitalize; *HIMARS* is acceptable on second reference.

high speed vessel The correct way to identify a high speed vessel in a caption is as follows: *high speed vessel Swift (HSV-2)*. In subsequent references, HSV-2 is acceptable. Note: This is the only Navy-operated vessel type for which a hyphen is acceptable in the designator. See the entry for **Military Sealift Command**.

home port/homeported The term *home port* is two words, while *homeported* is one word.

> *The ship is headed for its home port of San Diego.*

> *The ship is homeported in San Diego.*

hometown Do not include the hometowns of Service members in captions.

hospital ship Do not capitalize. For example: *The hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) was originally an oil tanker*. Note: This is a Military Sealift Command ship, therefore a hyphen is acceptable in the hull number. See **hull numbers, Military Sealift Command**.

howitzer Lowercase. Not a proper noun.

hull numbers Include hull numbers in parentheses after ship names on first reference. United States Ships (USS) and U.S. Coast Guard Cutters (USCGC) are not hyphenated; U.S. Naval Ships (USNS) with a classification beginning with "T" get a hyphen between the "T" and the remaining letters, but not between the letters and the numbers. U.S. Army vessel (USAV) hull numbers are hyphenated.

> **Style Check: Hull numbers**
> USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77)
> USNS Alan Shepard (T-AKE 3)
> USCGC Diligence (WMEC 616)
> USAV Spearhead (TSV-1X)

Humvee When referring to a high-mobility, multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV), *Humvee* is acceptable on first reference; the word is capitalized. It is not necessary to spell out the entire term or use the abbreviation. However, the abbreviation can be used in keywords.

in situ No hyphen, no quotation marks.

insure/ensure *To insure* means to take out insurance on something; *to ensure* means to make certain or guarantee. For example: *People should insure their vehicles to ensure they can get a replacement in case of an accident.*

jargon Don't use a military term or slang expression that might require further explanation for the general public; if such a term is used, provide a short explanation of its meaning.

joint Per Joint Publication 1-02: Connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more military departments participate. See **combined**.

joint combined exchange training A multiservice and multinational exchange of skills and knowledge between U.S. forces and their host nation

counterparts.

landing zone Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location. *LZ* is acceptable on second reference.

> *U.S. Soldiers gather their gear after parachuting onto Landing Zone Tombstone.*
>
> *The landing zone was not cleared, so the mission was aborted.*

LCAC The correct term is *landing craft, air cushion.* Use it for singlar and plural. Use lowercase unless identifying a specific, numbered LCAC (e.g., *Landing Craft, Air Cushion 8*). The acronym is acceptable on second reference.

LCU Landing craft utility. Use lowercase unless identifying a specific numbered LCU (e.g., *Landing Craft Utility 1627*). The acronym is acceptable on second reference.

live fire/live-fire Two words as a noun: *The practice range was for shooting blanks only; it did not allow live fire.* Hyphenate as an adjective/compound modifier: *The live-fire exercise lasted all day.*

loadmaster One word.

local Use this word only when it is necessary to differentiate a local leader or organization from a foreign one. Most of the time it will be unnecessary. In the following example, the use of the word adds nothing to the meaning of the sentence, as is demonstrated by removing it.

> *U.S. Soldiers talk to local Iraqi citizens at a local market in Baghdad.*
>
> *U.S. Soldiers talk to Iraqi citizens at a market in Baghdad.*

In the following sentence, however, the word adds context:

> *Local leaders and charitable organizations have joined the U.S. effort to provide disaster relief to affected areas.*

locations Follow AP style rules when listing geographic names, directions and regions. The names of airports, hospitals, etc., should not be listed like cities. For example: *Beaumont Airport, Texas*. There is no such city in Texas, so the correct way to refer to this in a caption is *Beaumont Municipal Airport in Beaumont, Texas*. Do not write "here" in place of a location name.

loose/lose *Loose* means not tight, while *lose* means to misplace something or to fail to win.

> *The lug nuts were loose, causing the Humvee to lose its wheels.*

man the rails

marine vessel *MV* is acceptable on second reference.

Mark weapons Do not use the abbreviations *MK* or *Mk*. Use the indefinite article *a* before the name of the weapon. No hyphens.

> *A U.S. Soldier engages a target with a Mark 19 grenade launcher in Baghdad June 5, 2004.*

mass casualty/mass casualty exercise No hyphen.

medical civic action program *MEDCAP* is acceptable on second reference.

military decorations Military decorations and awards are never *won*. Use terms such as *earned*, *received* or *presented with*. A person who holds an award is a *recipient*, not a *winner*.

> *U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta, a recipient of the Medal of Honor, smiles as he and his family meet with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates at the Pentagon in Arlington, Va., Nov. 17, 2010. Giunta received the nation's highest military honor for rescuing two members of his squad during an ambush on his platoon in Afghanistan in October 2007.*

military operations on urban terrain *MOUT* is an out-of-favor term; the preferred term is *urban operations (UO)*. The term *MOUT* is still in limited use, however, and may be used when referring to a specific *MOUT city* or *MOUT site*, but should not be used in the following senses: "… train for military operations on urban terrain …" or "… conducts military operations on urban terrain training." See **urban operations**.

Military Sealift Command Ships operated by the Military Sealift Command carry the designation *USNS* (United States Naval Ship) and are not commissioned ships. Also, they are crewed mostly by civilians. Some MSC ships have military personnel assigned to carry out specialized military functions such as communications and supply operations. MSC ships carry the prefix "T-" before their normal hull numbers. For example: *The salvage ship USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) was formerly a U.S. Navy ship designated ARS 51*. See **hull numbers**.

military titles Abbreviate all military titles in accordance with AP style. On second reference, drop the title and use just the last name. See Table 1, Military rank abbreviations, on pages 22 and 22 for the appropriate abbreviations for each rank.

military unit names See the section on military units, page 12.

modular airborne firefighting system Do not capitalize. *MAFFS* (or *MAFFS II*, if applicable) is

acceptable on second reference.

MRAP The correct term is *mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle*. The appropriate use, with acronym, is *MRAP vehicle*. On first use, spell it out, and do not capitalize. Also: *mine-resistant, ambush-protected all-terrain vehicle*, second reference *M-ATV*.

> *U.S. Airmen load mine-resistant, ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles Aug. 27, 2011. The MRAP vehicles were to be transported to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.*

MRE The correct term is either *meal, ready to eat* or *meals, ready to eat. MRE* (singular) or *MREs* (plural) is acceptable on second reference.

museum ships If a museum ship is mentioned in a caption, please use the official name of the museum or write it as you would any other decommissioned ship.

> *U.S. Sailors tour the Battleship Missouri Memorial at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, June 5, 2012.*

> *U.S. Sailors tour the decommissioned battleship USS Missouri (BB 63) at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, June 5, 2012.*

nation Use lowercase unless at the start of the sentence.

national anthem

National Guard If Service members in an image are part of a state's National Guard, indicate the state (with specific branch, if appropriate). Identify personnel as *Soldiers* or *Airmen* (or by their parent service branch) as appropriate.

Style Check: National Guard

U.S. Airmen with the Colorado Air National Guard prepare a C-130 Hercules aircraft for a mission at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., June 1, 2012.

U.S. Army Sgt. John Smith, with the 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment, North Carolina Army National Guard, conducts marksmanship training at Camp Shelby, Miss., Sept. 8, 2012.

Florida National Guardsmen patrol a street in Jacksonville, Fla., after a hurricane Sept. 3, 2009.

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nationality Refer to the CIA World Factbook to determine the proper adjective for a citizen of a specific nation. (For example, a citizen of Afghanistan is an Afghan.)

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *NATO* is acceptable on first reference, per AP.

Nigerian/Nigerien The adjective *Nigerian* means a person from Nigeria, while *Nigerien* means a person from Niger.

noncommissioned officer Do not hyphenate; use lowercase unless it appears at the start of a sentence. *NCO* is acceptable on second reference.

officer in charge Do not hyphenate; use lowercase unless it appears before a name.

OIF/OEF Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Spell out on first reference. Do not add rotation numbers to these titles.

operations Capitalize uniquely named operations, but capitalize the word *operation* only if it is part of the official title of the operation (e.g., Operation Enduring Freedom). Do not capitalize generic descriptors for operations.

ordinance/ordnance An *ordinance* is a local law, while *ordnance* refers to weapons and ammunition. *Ordnance* is both singular and plural. Do not use *ordnances*.

over/more than
Over refers to physical placement of an object above something else. *More than* is used with quantities. See **under/less, fewer than**.

Style Check: over/more than

The flag flies over the Capitol building.

More than 50,000 Service members were stationed in the area.

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pass in review Not *pass and review*.

Pentagon Use *Arlington, Va.,* to describe the location of the Pentagon, per AP.

Persian Gulf Do not use *Arabian Gulf*. Note that the Arabian Sea is a separate body of water and should not be confused with references to the Persian Gulf.

pierside One word.

photographer's credit Must be included at the end of all captions. For formatting guidance, see the section on photographer's credit under Chapter 5, Captioning basics on page 34.

post-flight Per AP.

POW/MIA Prisoner of war/missing in action. *POW/MIA* is acceptable on first reference. This differs from the Associated Press Stylebook.

pre-commissioning unit (PCU) Capitalize when used before the name of a ship before it is commissioned. For example: *Pre-Commissioning Unit Mississippi (SSN 782)*. *PCU* is acceptable on second reference.

preflight Per AP.

president Capitalize before the name of the president. Do not use the acronym *POTUS* at any time in captions. On second reference, use the last name only. When listed without a name, use lowercase.

> *President Barack Obama addresses U.S. Military Academy cadets April 4, 2011. The president thanked military personnel for their service.*

Prime BEEF Spell out the full name of the unit (e.g., 577th Expeditionary Prime Base Emergency Engineer Force). *Expeditionary Prime BEEF* is acceptable on second reference.

professional titles When identifying a Service member with a professional title, such as chaplain or physician, add the professional title in lowercase after the rank and name of the subject.

> *U.S. Army Maj. Bill Smith, a chaplain, conducts a religious service.*

> *U.S. Navy Cmdr. Jane Jones, a physician, examines a patient.*

provincial reconstruction team Spell out on first reference; *PRT* is appropriate on second reference. This term is lowercase unless it is a specific, named PRT, such as *Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team*.

RAF bases No need to spell out RAF.

> *U.S. Airmen stationed at RAF Mildenhall, England, conduct physical training June 2, 2012.*

rank, rate When used with a person's name, uppercase the rank and use AP rank style (see Table 1, Military rank abbreviations, on pages 21 and 22). When not part of a title, ranks appearing in captions are lowercase and are not abbreviated. For example: *U.S. Marine Corps staff sergeants participate in a training exercise.*

Note: When writing Navy and Coast Guard ranks, use the rate before the name. For example: *U.S. Navy Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Pete Rodriguez* instead of *U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Pete Rodriguez, a boatswain's mate*. This differs from the Associated Press Stylebook.

Style Check: rappel vs. repel

U.S. Army Sgt. John Jones rappels down a rock face during training.

U.S. Marines successfully repelled the insurgent attack on their compound.

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rappel, rappelling/repel, repelling To *rappel* is to use ropes to lower oneself from a high place, such as a cliff, building or helicopter. To *repel* is to fend

something off.

RED HORSE Spell it out on first reference: *Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers. RED HORSE* is acceptable on second reference.

> *U.S. Airmen with the 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers (RED HORSE) maintain equipment at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., July 10, 2012. The 820th RED HORSE was preparing for an exercise.*

replenishment at sea Do not hyphenate; use lowercase.

reserve/reserves Capitalize *Reserve* when referring to specific military organizations. For example: *U.S. Army Reserve,* not *Reserves*. In the Navy, the correct term is *Navy Reserve*, not *naval reserve*. When referring to a reserve Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine, do not capitalize *reserve*. Do not use the term *reservist*. Only use the term *reserves* when referring collectively to the reserve components.

retired Do not use *(Ret.)* when describing a retired Service member. Use the word *retired* before his or her service, rank and name.

> *Retired U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Smith, left, delivers a speech.*

> *U.S. Navy Cmdr. John Jones, left, shakes hands with retired Chief Petty Officer Jane Williams.*

rifle salute A salute to the deceased at military funerals, usually by seven riflemen each firing three shots in unison. Do not confuse this with a **21-gun salute**.

rigid-hull inflatable boat Do not capitalize. *RHIB* is acceptable on second reference.

Roman numerals U.S. Army corps and U.S. Marine Corps expeditionary forces are designated with Roman numerals. For example: *XVIII Airborne Corps, I Marine Expeditionary Force.*

same-sex marriage When referring to state-sanctioned same-sex marriages in which one or both partners are in the U.S. Armed Forces, use the term *spouse* rather than *husband* or *wife*. Use the term *partner* for unmarried couples.

Seabee When identifying an individual Sailor as a Seabee, list the Sailor's rank or rating as usual and add the designation as you would a job description.

> *U.S. Navy Builder 1st Class Jane Smith, a Seabee with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 2, paints a door at a school in Kabul, Afghanistan, June 12, 2013.*

SEAL Sea, Air, Land. *SEAL* is acceptable on first reference. If plural, use *SEALs*.

select/selectee Identify a Service member by the rank they hold at the time the image was taken, not the rank they are selected for. However, it is permissible to indicate the Service member is on the verge of promotion.

> *U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Joe Smith, selected for promotion to chief petty officer, salutes an officer at Naval Station Great Lakes, Ill., June 12, 2012.*

> *U.S. Navy petty officers first class, selected for promotion to chief petty officer, clean a park as part of a community service project in Pensacola, Fla., July 14, 2012.*

Sept. 11 When referring to the terrorist attacks of this day, use *Sept. 11 attack* or *Sept. 11 terrorist attack*. Use *2001* only if needed for clarity. *9/11* is also acceptable in all references.

Service member The term is two words; capitalize *Service* when referring to a U.S. Service member.

> *U.S. Service members help clean up in New York City after Hurricane Sandy.*

ship names Use the definite article *the* before a ship name, or ship type preceding a ship name. Also use the full name of the ship (without the *USS*) on second reference. Do not use the personal pronouns *she* or *her*.

> *U.S. Sailors wash down the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) in the Atlantic Ocean May 15, 2012. The George H.W. Bush was underway on its first deployment.*

sideboys One word.

sight/site A *sight* is something that is seen or is worth seeing, or a device that helps the eye to aim or find something. A *site* is a location. See examples at right.

South Korea Use this style when referring to the country, its people and military personnel in captions.

> *U.S. Soldiers and South Korean marines conduct marksmanship training at Camp Casey, South Korea, June 10, 2012.*

Southwest Asia Both words are capitalized.

Style Check: sight vs. site

U.S. Soldiers clear weapons cache sites.

A U.S. Marine sets her sights on a target during an exercise.

While in port, U.S. Sailors took in the sights.

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special operations forces Use this term to describe U.S. special warfare units or members of those units when their exact service or unit affiliation is not clear, or when special warfare units of multiple services are conducting joint operations. Do not use *special operator* or *commando*.

> *A U.S. special operations forces Service member patrols in a field near Kandahar, Afghanistan, April 5, 2012.*

> *President Barack Obama praises the actions of U.S. special operations forces in Afghanistan while speaking at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., Dec. 30, 2011.*

strongpoint One word. Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location.

> *U.S. Soldiers stationed at Strongpoint Tarnak clean their weapons following a patrol.*

> *U.S. Marines search for a position to use as a strongpoint in a planned ambush of Taliban forces.*

task force Use lowercase unless referring to a specific named or numbered task force.

taxi/taxis/taxiing/taxied Used to describe the movement of aircraft on the ground other than taking off or landing. Don't use the phrase *taxis/taxiing on a runway* if the aircraft is not actually on the runway.

> *A U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft taxis before takeoff at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea, July 12, 2012.*

3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) The proper name of the Army unit that handles ceremonial responsibilities at Arlington National Cemetery. See **Tomb of the Unknowns**.

> *U.S. Soldiers with the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) perform a changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va., Sept. 12, 2012.*

threat and vulnerability assessment

Tomb of the Unknowns Not *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*.

21-gun salute A *21-gun* (or other odd number) *salute* is an artillery salute for rendering honors to the president, senior military leaders, foreign dignitaries and other notable persons. For the action performed at military funerals, see **rifle salute**.

under/less, fewer than *Under* refers to physical placement below another object. *Less than* and *fewer than* are used with quantities. See **over/more than** and the *Associated Press Stylebook fewer, less* entry.

underway One word in all cases, per AP.

urban operations (UO) Replaces *military operations on urban terrain* (MOUT) in most uses. See entry for **military operations on urban terrain**.

USCGC Use before the name of a Coast Guard cutter. See **hull numbers**.

> *The medium endurance cutter USCGC Diligence (WMEC 616) sailed into the port of Wilmington, N.C., Aug. 7, 2012.*

USO United Service Organizations. *USO* is acceptable on first reference.

vehicle-borne The correct term is *vehicle-borne improvised explosive device*. *VBIED* is acceptable on second reference.

war on terrorism This is the acceptable term to use; it is all lowercase. Do not use *global war on terrorism, GWOT* or *war on terror*.

warfare qualifications (Navy) Do not use Navy warfare qualifications (SW, AW, etc.) when writing a Sailor's rating in captions or keywords.

warfighter One word; use lowercase.

weapons Use the following formats for weapons and weapon systems; note the appropriate hyphenation, spacing and capitalization. See Table 4, Selected weapons, on page 26 for a more comprehensive list of weapons.

- .50-caliber, 9 mm
- M119 105 mm howitzer
- M4 carbine, M16 rifle, M9 pistol
- GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided bomb
- AIM-9 Sidewinder missile

weapons cache The term, correctly used, is either *weapons cache* (singular) or *weapons caches* (plural). Do not use *hidden weapons cache. Cache* implies hidden.

White House Use *Washington, D.C.,* to describe the location of the White House.

wounded warrior Only capitalize when used in the name of a specific event or organization (e.g., *Wounded Warrior Project*).

Military unit names

Use uppercase only when referring to the name of a specific unit. Use the full name of the unit on first reference, and the acronym on all subsequent references. Include the acronym only if the term is used more than once within the caption. In that case, spell out the name and then include the acronym in parentheses. (See Table 2, Force structure, on page 24 for the force structure of the services.)

It is the responsibility of the photographer in the field to confirm the correct name of a military unit depicted in imagery and caption.

When placing Service members, ships, aircraft or units in a specific place, use the following terminology:

- A Service member is *stationed on* or *stationed at* a base; *with* or *assigned to* a unit or ship. (Do not use *from*, as that implies hometown or place of birth.) The preferred term for a person physically located on a ship is *aboard*.

- A ship is *based* or *homeported* at a specific place.

- An aircraft *belongs to* or is *assigned to* a particular unit and is *deployed with* that unit to a certain location. It is *stationed at* a base or is *stationed at* or *stationed aboard* a ship; it is *deployed with* or *operating from* a ship.

- A unit is *stationed at* a particular base and is *deployed to* a certain location or *deployed with* a larger unit. Squadrons are *stationed at* Air Force bases, air bases or air stations. Navy and Marine Corps air wings and other units may be *deployed with* ships.

> ### Style check: Military units
>
> U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joe Smith, with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, prepares for a convoy training mission at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Jan. 15, 2010.
>
> U.S. Sailors assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) prepare for a uniform inspection July 6, 2012, at their home port of Naval Station Everett, Wash.
>
> A U.S. Air Force B-2 Spirit aircraft assigned to the 509th Bomb Wing takes off from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Sept. 7, 2011.

Air Force Abbreviate Air Force units using standard acronym rules; note if it is a National Guard unit. List units from smallest to largest. In most cases, simply naming the squadron or wing will suffice.

> U.S. Airmen with the 375th Security Forces Squadron (SFS) man a checkpoint in Anbar province, Iraq, Oct. 24, 2010. The 375th SFS was operating in support of Operation New Dawn.
>
> U.S. Airmen with the 142nd Fighter Wing, Oregon Air National Guard participate in an exercise at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., Nov. 14, 2011.

Army Abbreviate Army units using standard acronym rules; note if it is a National Guard unit. List units from smallest to largest. Refer to Table 2, Force structure, on page 23.

Army units can be tricky. It does not suffice to say that a Soldier simply belongs to *Alpha Company, 1st Battalion*, as there are a multitude of Alpha Companies and 1st Battalions throughout the Army. Be sure to get the unit's regimental, brigade or division affiliation; in other words, make sure a **precise**, **unique** unit name is listed.

Army: Numbered armies (e.g., *First Army*) can generally stand alone if the Soldiers depicted are assigned to various units within the numbered army or it's a wide shot of a numbered army event.

Corps: Corps (e.g., *XVIII Airborne Corps*) can generally stand alone if the Soldiers depicted are assigned to various units within the corps or it's a wide shot of a corps event.

Division: Divisions (e.g., *1st Cavalry Division*) can generally stand alone if the Soldiers depicted are assigned to various units within the division or it's a wide shot of a division event.

Brigade/Brigade Combat Team: Most brigades/brigade combat teams numbered lower than 5 are part of a larger division. For example, each active-duty division has a 1st brigade combat team, so be sure to list

the division affiliation (e.g., *1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division*). There are a number of active-duty and National Guard standalone brigade combat teams, and they generally can be listed without a division. However, if it's a National Guard unit, be sure to list the state it's affiliated with. (e.g., *30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, North Carolina Army National Guard.*)

Regiment: Do not use the shorthand for these units. For example, instead of writing *1/120 Infantry*, write out the full name: *1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment*. Always list the subordinate unit (e.g., *1st Battalion, 2nd Squadron*) before the name of the regiment. While the Army generally does not use the regimental command structure like it used to, the regimental heritage is kept to maintain the history and heraldry of many units.

Battalion/Squadron: Most combat arms (i.e., infantry, artillery, cavalry and armor) battalions and squadrons belong to a numbered regiment, which must be listed in the caption. (e.g., *the 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.*)

Many combat support and combat service support battalions do not have a specific regimental affiliation, but it's best to list the brigade and/or division to which they belong. (e.g., *the 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division*).

Company/Troop/Battery: Companies starting with a letter always belong to a numbered battalion and regiment, which will be listed in the caption as well. Spell out such company names using the phonetic alphabet. (e.g., *Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment, 30th Brigade Combat Team, North Carolina Army National Guard.*) NOTE: Some company-level units use non-standard nicknames (e.g., "Killer Company"). Be sure to get the proper name of the unit.

U.S. Soldiers with the 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 10th Mountain Division provide security during a humanitarian mission outside of Kabul, Afghanistan, March 4, 2010. The 1st BCT was supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

A U.S. Soldier with the 197th Special Troops Company, Utah Army National Guard gathers his parachute after a static line jump in Fairfield, Utah, March 15, 2012.

U.S. Army Sgt. John Smith, an infantryman with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, shouts an order to fellow Soldiers during a training exercise at Fort Riley, Kan., April 7, 2013.

Joint/combined The following list shows the correct format of some common joint and/or combined organizations and how to abbreviate them. According to Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, **joint** is defined as, "Connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate;" **combined** is defined as, "A term identifying two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies operating together."

- Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA)
- Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150)
- International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)
- Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)

Marine Corps Formats for Marine Corps units and their acronyms appear below. List units from smallest to largest.

Air wing: *The Marines are assigned to the 2nd Marine Air Wing (MAW). The 2nd MAW deployed from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., in support of Operation New Dawn.*

Combat logistics battalion: *The Marines are deployed with Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB) 6 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. CLB-6 is based at Camp Lejeune, N.C.*

Marine expeditionary force: *The Marines are assigned to II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF). II MEF deployed from Camp Lejeune, N.C., in support of Operation New Dawn.*

Marine expeditionary unit: *The Marines are assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).*

The 31st MEU was participating in bilateral exercises while aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2).

Regiment: Do not use the shorthand for these units. Instead of writing *1/7 Marines*, write the full name: *1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment.*

Regimental combat team: *The Marines are assigned to Regimental Combat Team (RCT) 1. RCT-1 deployed from Camp Pendleton, Calif., in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.*

Squadron: Spell out the full name of the squadron on first reference. Since the full names and abbreviations of squadrons do not follow normal acronym rules of assignation, include squadron abbreviations **even if used only once**. *The Marines are assigned to Marine Transport Squadron (VMR) 1. VMR-1 assisted in the search for a downed aircraft near Jacksonville, N.C.* **See page 15 for aviation squadron abbreviations**

Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Note hyphenation

Navy Formats for Navy units and their acronyms appear below. List units from smallest to largest, where applicable.

construction battalion center: CBC	naval air facility: NAF
naval air station: NAS	naval amphibious base: NAB
naval facility: NAVFAC	naval station: NAVSTA
naval weapons station: NWS	commander fleet activities: CFA

Activities: Spell out the full name of the naval activity on first reference and capitalize only when part of a proper name. For example: *Naval Station Rota, Spain.* On second reference, abbreviate as follows: *NAVSTA Rota.*

Detachment: Do not abbreviate. *The Sailors are assigned to Detachment 5, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 2.*

Fleet: When referring to a numbered fleet, always use numerals and precede with *U.S.* For example: *U.S. 7th Fleet.*

Naval mobile construction battalion: On first reference, spell out and use a numeral. Use the acronym on second reference. *U.S. Sailors with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1 construct a school in Honduras. NMCB-1 is participating in exercise New Horizons.*

Ship: List the type of ship (e.g., destroyer, aircraft carrier), full name of the ship and hull number (in parentheses) for each ship on first reference. On second reference, drop the ship type, *USS* and the hull number. Use the definite article *the* before the ship's name. Do not use the personal pronouns *she* or *her*. All ship names appear in regular type, not in all caps. See **hull numbers** and **ship names**.

> *U.S. Sailors man the rails as the aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) departs Yokosuka, Japan, June 27, 2011. The George Washington was embarking on a six-month deployment.*

Squadron: Spell out the full name of a squadron on first reference. Include the abbreviation whether or not the squadron appears again in the caption. **See page 15 for aviation squadron abbreviations.**

> *U.S. Navy Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 97 was deployed aboard the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). During the deployment, VFA-97 maintained a perfect safety record.*

Marine Corps aviation units *	
HMH—Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron	VMA—Marine Attack Squadron
HMLA—Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron	VMAQ—Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron
HMM—Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron	VMFA—Marine Fighter Attack Squadron
HMT—Marine Heavy Helicopter Training Squadron	VMFA (AW)—Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron
HMX—Marine Helicopter Squadron	VMM—Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron
MACS - Marine Air Control Squadron	VMR—Marine Transport Squadron
MALS—Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron	VMU—Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron
MWCS—Marine Wing Communications Squadron	VMAT—Marine Attack Training Squadron
MWSG - Marine Wing Support Group	VMFAT—Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron
MWSS—Marine Wing Support Squadron	VMFT—Marine Fighter Training Squadron
VMMT—Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron	VMGR—Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron
VMX—Marine Tiltrotor Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron	

Navy aviation units *	
HC—Helicopter Combat Support Squadron	VAW—Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron
HM—Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron	VF—Fighter Squadron
HS—Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron	VFA—Strike Fighter Squadron
HSC—Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron	VFC—Fleet Fighter Composite Squadron
HSM—Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron	VP—Patrol Squadron
HSL—Helicopter Anti-Submarine (light) Squadron	VRC—Carrier Fleet Logistics Support Squadron
HT—Helicopter Training Squadron	VQ—Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron
VA—Attack Squadron	VR—Fleet Logistics Support Squadron
VAQ—Electronic Attack Squadron	VS—Sea Control Squadron
VT—Training Squadron (fixed wing)	HUQ - Unmanned Reconnaissance Helicopter Squadron
VX, HX - Air Test and Evaluation Squadron	CVW - Carrier Air Wing

* Capitalize only when used as part of an actual unit name.

Chapter 2
Still and motion imagery metadata

All of the style guidance contained in this publication also applies to the metadata of motion and still imagery. It is important that this information is both complete and accurate to ensure that an image is searchable and of the utmost value to the end user.

Enter the metadata in the following manner: Excepting abbreviations, all entries should be in regular text, not in all capital letters. Table 8 on pages 28-30 lists the metadata fields and their corresponding names and placement in common imagery management software programs. These same guidelines apply if you are using a video editing program that allows for the modification of video metadata.

Additionally, form DD 2537 must be completed for all motion imagery, either electronically or on paper. A sample form can be found in Chapter 7 on page 43.

Caption

Ensure that the caption is complete and adheres to the standards provided by this guide. Include the photographer credit line and the release status within the caption.

Operation/Exercise

This field should only be filled out with the name of an official operation or exercise. Official operations and exercises include *New Dawn*, *Enduring Freedom,* and named exercises such as *Balikatan* or *Cobra Gold*. Do not include *Operation* or *Exercise* in this field.

Photographer's Rank/Name

Include the rank and full name of the photographer. Because of space limitations in this field, use an abbreviated rank (using the Service rank style of the photographer, i.e., SGT for an Army sergeant, A1C for an Airman 1st Class) to ensure that the full name of the photographer appears (e.g., *MC1 John Smith* or *Pfc Shannon Jones*).

Photographer's Home Unit

Include the home unit of the photographer (e.g., *3rd Marine Division* or *1st Combat Camera Squadron*). Do not put the name of the shooter's service (e.g., *U.S. Marine Corps*).

Photographer's TDY/TAD Unit

Include the unit to which the photographer is assigned during the shoot (must be on official orders). If this information does not differ from that in the Photographer's Home Unit field, or the photographer was not on official orders, leave this blank.

Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN)

(Reference: Department of Defense Instruction 5040.02, Enclosure 6, October 27, 2011)

Assign each image a unique VIRIN. A VIRIN consists of 15 alphanumeric characters separated by hyphens into four fields organized in the alpha (A) numeric (N) format YYMMDD-A-AANNN-NNN.

Field one, the first six characters, is the date the imagery was shot, in YYMMDD format.

Field two, the seventh character, represents the Service of the photographer.

- A: Army, uniformed member or civilian employee
- D: Department of Defense, uniformed member, civilian employee, or contract employee of the Department of Defense not falling into one of the other categories
- F: Air Force, uniformed member or civilian employee
- G: Coast Guard, uniformed member or civilian employee
- H: Department of Homeland Security, not including Coast Guard
- M: Marine Corps, uniformed member or civilian employee
- N: Navy, uniformed member or civilian employee
- O: Any person not falling into another category, including foreign nationals

- S: Department of State
- Z: National Guard (either branch), uniformed member or civilian employee, *even when on federal active-duty status or deployed overseas*

Field three is the photographer's VISION ID.

VISION ID

(Reference: Department of Defense Instruction 5040.02, Enclosure 7, October 27, 2011)

Field three (AANNN): In the case of all categories above except O, field three shall consist of the Visual Information Identification (VISION ID) of the image originator, which is assigned by DIMOC through the Defense Imagery website at http://www.defenseimagery.mil.

In the case of category O, such as a member of a foreign military not registered with a VISION ID, a civilian not affiliated with the Department of Defense, or for an image with undetermined or system-based origin, use the identifier **ZZ999** in field three.

*VI Professionals in need of a permanent VISION ID can obtain one at **https://vipro.defenseimagery.mil**

Field four, the last three digits, identify unique images and are assigned in the order in which the images were shot.

***Non-U.S. photographers** will also add a fifth field containing the photographer's two-letter country code, which can be found at http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/country_code_list.htm

For instance, if an image was shot July 1, 2013, by a Belgian photographer, the VIRIN would look like this: *130701-O-ZZ999-001-BE*

Image Source

Enter the medium used to capture the image, either digital or film.

Caption Editor

Any person who reviews a caption should enter his or her name here, whether or not he or she made any changes to the caption or the metadata.

At each stage in the imagery management cycle, each new editor should enter his or her name in this field, replacing the previous name.

Base/Locale

Enter the city, base, ship, installation or other location at which the image was captured, not the location to which the photographer is assigned and/or deployed. For example, if the photographer is assigned to Camp Victory, but the image is captured in a Baghdad neighborhood, this field should read *Baghdad*.

Should the location not be this specific, the field may be left blank. For example, for an image captured *near the Syrian border*, filling out the Country/Area field is sufficient.

State/Province

Enter the state or province in which the image was captured, if applicable.

Country/Area

Enter the country or area in which the image was captured. Areas will usually be bodies of water such as the Persian Gulf or regions such as the Arctic Circle. Should it be an undisclosed location, enter that information here as well.

File Name

Assign each image a unique file name. **This should be the VIRIN** (e.g., 130103-A-ZZ999-001**).**

Date Shot

Enter the date the image was captured.

Command Shown

Enter the geographical combatant command where the photo was taken (USPACOM, USNORTHCOM, USEUCOM, USCENTCOM, USAFRICOM, USSOUTHCOM). In the case of Afghanistan, use ISAF; for Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, use CJTF-HOA. **Do not** enter the local command or specific unit of the photographer.

Service Shown

Enter the most appropriate one-letter code for the Service depicted in the image, based on the main subject or subjects of the image. This information is essential for tracking imagery in the joint environment.

- A: Army
- C: Coalition
- D: DoD civilian (DoD civilians meeting with U.S. or foreign dignitaries fall under this as well)
- F: Air Force
- G: Coast Guard
- J: Joint/multi-Service (including active-duty forces shown with a National Guard component)
- K: Foreign (service members or civilians, all from one nation)
- L: Multinational (service members or civilians from more than one nation)
- M: Marine Corps
- N: Navy
- O: Other (U.S. and/or foreign civilians not falling into one of the other categories)
- Z: National Guard (regardless of duty status, location or component)

Supplemental Category

This space contains the classification of the image, the classification authority and the contact information for the photographer at his or her current location. Enter the appropriate classification (Unclassified, Confidential, Secret) according to the *Controlled Access Program Coordination Office (CAPCO) Register*. **NOTE**: Imagery marked SECRET **must** be sent via SIPR . If the image is classified, enter the classification authority and downgrading schedule.

Public Release Instructions

Enter the release status of the image (Released, Not Released, or Not Reviewed) as well as the name, duty position, phone number and/or email address of the releasing authority. **NOTE**: The releasing authority will be a person's name and contact information; just a title or unit name is unacceptable.

- **Released:** The image has been sent to DIMOC and is cleared for public release.
- **Not Released:** The image has been sent to DIMOC, but is not cleared for public release.
- **Not Reviewed:** The image has been sent to DIMOC, but there is no release authority assigned to the operation/exercise. The photographer must send contact information and a detailed plan to get imagery reviewed.
- **Classified imagery:** Imagery marked SECRET *must* be sent via SIPR.

Keywords

A keyword is a word or phrase that signifies the meaning or main ideas of an image. The primary function of keywords is to improve accessibility of the imagery. Using appropriate keywords will ensure that an image is more searchable, making it more readily available to the end user. Separate keywords with a semicolon (e.g., *USAF; Airman; F-16 Fighting Falcon; Aircraft*).

For more information on keywording, see Chapter 3 on page 19 and "Table 8. Sample Keywords" on page 2727.

Chapter 3
Keywording

Use the 5 Ws to determine the most prominent elements within the image or video. Often, the who, what and where will be appropriate choices.

When selecting keywords for imagery, ask the following questions and choose keywords based on the answers:

- What is the message of the image or video?
- What person or object has the biggest impact?
- Why would someone want the image or video?
- What other major elements or concepts appear in the image or video but not in the caption?

Choose several keywords that best describe the visual content of the image or video. Using appropriate keywords will ensure that imagery is more searchable, making it more readily available to the end user.

Example 1.

In this example, patrol is the primary action of the image. Therefore *Patrol* is a keyword. However, the concept of the image is training. *Training* is also a keyword. Inserting *Patrol* as a keyword may appear redundant, since the word appears in the caption, but it allows for broader search capability and image accessibility if it is included.

A U.S. Marine with the 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion patrols an improvised explosive device training trail during jungle warfare training in Colombia Aug. 10, 2010. The unit was deployed in support of Partnership of the Americas/Southern Exchange, a combined amphibious exercise with maritime forces from 10 nations. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Ammon W. Carter/Released)

Keywords for Example 1: *USMC; Marine; Patrol; 3rd AAB; IED; M4 carbine; Training; Jungle warfare*

Example 2.

A search looks for each individual word in a keyword for a match, therefore the keyword for an image of an F/A-18E Super Hornet aircraft needs to be its full technical name: F/A-18E Super Hornet. This ensures that no matter the terms the user enters into a search (i.e., *18E, Hornet*) the search will return results with those words or phrases in the keywords. It is important to also include

aircraft, otherwise a user searching simply for *aircraft* will not return all the appropriate images.

The keywords for Example 2: *F/A-18E Super Hornet; F-22 Raptor; Aircraft*

Standard format for keywords

1. Treat the keyword field similarly to the caption field; proper spelling and capitalization is important.
   - For example: *M1A1 Abrams tank; USAID; Secretary of Defense*
2. Write all technical names as directed by the U.S. Military Services' fact files and yearbooks.

3. Keywords are separated by semicolons (the final keyword does not get a semicolon after it).
   - For example: *M1A1 Abrams tank; F/A-18E Super Hornet; Aircraft*
4. Keywords may be phrases or full names and in these instances should not be separated.
5. The Photographer's Service is a keyword, but only in its acronym/abbreviated form.
   - For example: *USMC; USA; USN; USAF; USCG; RAF*

Correct	Incorrect
F/A-18E Super Hornet; Aircraft	F/A-18E; Super; Hornet; Aircraft;
M1A1 Abrams tank	M1A1; Abrams; Tank;
M14 Enhanced Battle Rifle	M14; Enhanced; Battle; Rifle;

6. Words that are NEVER keywords:
   - Photographer's name (in any variation), unit or VISION ID
   - Release status
   - Classification status
   - Use of the image (i.e., publication)

Guidelines for selecting keywords

1. Consider and select from the broad categories list first. See the sample categories in "Table 8. Sample Keywords" on page 27.
2. What is the concept of the image?
   - Don't forget to add the theme/message of the image.
3. What is in the image?
   - Vehicles? Weapons?
   - Technical names for all types of vehicles (e.g., aircraft, ships, tanks, etc.) and all weaponry are keywords.
   - Ship names (including the hull number), classes and types are keywords.
     » For example: *USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69); Nimitz-class; Aircraft carrier*
4. Who is in the image?
   - Titles and occupation fields (not ranks) are keywords. This applies only to U.S. personnel.
     » For example: *Human intelligence collector; Drill instructor; Logistics Specialist; Ship's Boatswain; Platoon leader; Designated marksman; Infantryman; Rifleman*
   - There are four individuals whose title and name will always be keywords. These four people are the President, Vice President, Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
5. Does the image represent an event?
   - Is the event an operation or an exercise?
   - If so, the name of either the Operation/Exercise is not a keyword. These names are to be entered in the Operation/Exercise metadata field.
   - If not, then the event's full name is a keyword.
     » For example: *11th Annual Air Force Marathon*
6. Are there phrases, units, etc., that have acronyms/abbreviations that are not written in the caption? If so, the acronyms/abbreviations are keywords.
     » For example: *International Security Assistance Force* is written in the caption, but the acronym is not. *ISAF* is then a keyword.
     » For example: The image is from Operation Enduring Freedom. *OEF* is then a keyword.
     » For example: *6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division* is used in the caption once. Therefore, *6-1 CAV; 1 AD* are keywords.

Sample Keywords

The following list contains numerous examples of keywords used in imagery metadata. By no means is this a comprehensive list, but many common concepts, activities, events, people, weapons, ships, vehicles and other equipment are listed here. *If an item has words in parentheses next to it, those words are meant to describe what the keyword means, and are not part of the keyword itself.*

Concepts

Security; Safety; Education; Communication; COMREL (community relations); Training; Exercise; HADR (humanitarian assistance and disaster relief); Humanitarian assistance; Disaster Relief; Logistics; Maintenance; Navigation; Aviation; Agriculture; Religion; Health and wellness; MEDCAP (medical civil action project); ENCAP (engineering civil action project)

Activities

Recreation; Replenishment at sea; RAS (replenishment at sea); Vertical replenishment; VERTREP (vertical replenishment); Change of command; MWR (morale, welfare and recreation)

Events

Change of command; Retirement; Basic training; Recruit training; AIT; A-school; Commissioning; Decommissioning; Award; Funeral; Ceremony; Changing of the guard

Places

USNA; USAFA; USMA; FOB; COB; Bridge; Barracks: Galley; DFAC

People

(by service, certain positions and occupational specialties)
Soldier; Sailor; Airman; Marine; Coast Guardsman; National Guardsman; POTUS (President of the United States); VPOTUS (Vice President of the United States); CJCS (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff); SECDEF (Secretary of Defense); SEAL; Seabee; Culinary Specialist; Infantryman; Rifleman; Intelligence Analyst; Cadet; Drill instructor; Student

Weapons, aircraft and vehicles

B-52H Stratofortress; Aircraft
UH-60 Black Hawk; Helicopter
MV-22 Osprey; Tiltrotor aircraft
M16 rifle; M4 carbine; M27 IAR (Infantry Automatic Rifle); M110 SASS; HMMWV; MRAP; M-ATV; M1 Abrams; Tank; M2 Bradley; IFV; AAV-7A1; MAFFS (Modular airborne firefighting system)

Units and other organizations

1-4 CAV; 82nd ABN DIV; 30th HBCT; NCARNG; USO; 3rd U.S. INF RGT; The Old Guard; 3/2 Marines; 509th BW; 135th FW; NMCB-2; RIVRON-1; 10th MTN DIV; XVIII ABN CORPS; 8th Army; III MEF; 3rd MARDIV

Ships — *remember to include the type, class and hull number in parentheses with the ship name*

Aircraft carrier; USS Nimitz (CVN 68); Nimitz-class
Guided missile cruiser; USS Vicksburg (CG 69); Ticonderoga-class
Attack submarine; USS Mississippi (SSN 782) Virginia-class
Medium endurance cutter; USCGC Alert (WMEC 630); Reliance-class
Coastal tug; USAV MG Winfield Scott (LT-805); MG Nathaniel Greene-class

Chapter 4
References

Table 1, Military rank abbreviations (per AP)

Army commissioned officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
O-10	general	Gen.
O-9	lieutenant general	Lt. Gen.
O-8	major general	Maj. Gen.
O-7	brigadier general	Brig. Gen.
O-6	colonel	Col.
O-5	lieutenant colonel	Lt. Col.
O-4	major	Maj.
O-3	captain	Capt.
O-2	first lieutenant	1st Lt.
O-1	second lieutenant	2nd Lt.

Warrant officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
W-5	chief warrant officer 5	Chief Warrant Officer 5
W-4	chief warrant officer 4	Chief Warrant Officer 4
W-3	chief warrant officer 3	Chief Warrant Officer 3
W-2	chief warrant officer 2	Chief Warrant Officer 2
W-1	warrant officer	Warrant Officer

Enlisted personnel		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
E-9	sergeant major of the Army	Sgt. Maj. of the Army
	command sergeant major	Command Sgt. Maj.
	sergeant major	Sgt. Maj.
E-8	first sergeant	1st Sgt.
	master sergeant	Master Sgt.
E-7	sergeant first class	Sgt. 1st Class
E-6	staff sergeant	Staff Sgt.
E-5	sergeant	Sgt.
E-4	corporal	Cpl.
	specialist	Spc.
E-3	private first class	Pfc.
E-2	private	Pvt.
E-1	private	Pvt.

*Note on Navy enlisted personnel: Use the person's rating (e.g., *Gunner's Mate 1st Class; Chief Culinary Specialist*) whenever possible.

Navy commissioned officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
O-10	admiral	Adm.
O-9	vice admiral	Vice Adm.
O-8	rear admiral	Rear Adm.
O-7	rear admiral	Rear Adm.
O-6	captain	Capt.
O-5	commander	Cmdr.
O-4	lieutenant commander	Lt. Cmdr.
O-3	lieutenant	Lt.
O-2	lieutenant junior grade	Lt. j.g.
O-1	ensign	Ensign

Warrant officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
W-5	chief warrant officer 5	Chief Warrant Officer
W-4	chief warrant officer 4	Chief Warrant Officer
W-3	chief warrant officer 3	Chief Warrant Officer
W-2	chief warrant officer 2	Chief Warrant Officer

The grade of W-1 is not used in the Navy.

Enlisted personnel*		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
E-9	master chief petty officer of the Navy	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
	master chief petty officer	Master Chief Petty Officer
E-8	senior chief petty officer	Senior Chief Petty Officer
E-7	chief petty officer	Chief Petty Officer
E-6	petty officer first class	Petty Officer 1st Class
E-5	petty officer second class	Petty Officer 2nd Class
E-4	petty officer third class	Petty Officer 3rd Class
E-3	seaman	Seaman
E-2	seaman apprentice	Seaman Apprentice
E-1	seaman recruit	Seaman Recruit

Table 1 (Cont.), Military rank abbreviations

Marine Corps commissioned officers

Grade	Rank	Abbreviation
O-10	general	Gen.
O-9	lieutenant general	Lt. Gen.
O-8	major general	Maj. Gen.
O-7	brigadier general	Brig. Gen.
O-6	colonel	Col.
O-5	lieutenant colonel	Lt. Col.
O-4	major	Maj.
O-3	captain	Capt.
O-2	first lieutenant	1st Lt.
O-1	second lieutenant	2nd Lt.

Warrant officers

Grade	Rank	Abbreviation
W-5	chief warrant officer 5	Chief Warrant Officer 5
W-4	chief warrant officer 4	Chief Warrant Officer 4
W-3	chief warrant officer 3	Chief Warrant Officer 3
W-2	chief warrant officer 2	Chief Warrant Officer 2
W-1	warrant officer	Warrant Officer

Enlisted personnel

Grade	Rank	Abbreviation
E-9	sergeant major of the Marine Corps	Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps
	sergeant major	Sgt. Maj.
	master gunnery sergeant	Master Gunnery Sgt.
E-8	first sergeant	1st Sgt.
	master sergeant	Master Sgt.
E-7	gunnery sergeant	Gunnery Sgt.
E-6	staff sergeant	Staff Sgt.
E-5	sergeant	Sgt.
E-4	corporal	Cpl.
E-3	lance corporal	Lance Cpl.
E-2	private first class	Pfc.
E-1	private	Pvt.

Air Force commissioned officers

Grade	Rank	Abbreviation
O-10	general	Gen.
O-9	lieutenant general	Lt. Gen.
O-8	major general	Maj. Gen.
O-7	brigadier general	Brig. Gen.
O-6	colonel	Col.
O-5	lieutenant colonel	Lt. Col.
O-4	major	Maj.
O-3	captain	Capt.
O-2	first lieutenant	1st Lt.
O-1	second lieutenant	2nd Lt.

Warrant officers

Warrant officer ranks are not used in the Air Force.

Enlisted personnel

Grade	Rank	Abbreviation
E-9	chief master sergeant of the Air Force	Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force
	command chief master sergeant	Command Chief Master Sgt.
	chief master sergeant	Chief Master Sgt.
E-8	senior master sergeant	Senior Master Sgt.
E-7	master sergeant	Master Sgt.
E-6	technical sergeant	Tech. Sgt.
E-5	staff sergeant	Staff Sgt.
E-4	senior airman	Senior Airman
E-3	airman first class	Airman 1st Class
E-2	airman	Airman
E-1	airman basic	Airman

Table 2, Force structure

The following table provides the basic force structure of the four Services, listing units from smallest to largest groupings of Service members. Other organizational groupings do occur within each Service. This table is designed only to act as a guide to help the writer list unit designations within a caption. Only capitalize elements (e.g., brigade, platoon, wing, etc.) when used as part of a unit name.

Branch	Element	Consists of
U.S. Army	Soldier	individual
	Squad/section	9 to 10 Soldiers
	Platoon	16 to 44 Soldiers; 2 to 4 squads
	Company (or Battery/Troop)	62 to 190 Soldiers; 3 to 5 platoons
	Battalion (or Squadron)	300 to 1,000 Soldiers; 4 to 6 companies
	Brigade (or Group/Regiment)	3,000 to 5,000 Soldiers; 2 to 5 battalions
	Division	10,000 to 15,000 Soldiers; 3 brigades
	Corps	20,000 to 45,000 Soldiers; 2 to 5 divisions
	Army	50,000+ Soldiers
U.S. Air Force	Airman	individual
	Section	several Airmen
	Flight	2 or more sections or a dozen or more Airmen
	Squadron	3-4 flights
	Group	2 or more squadrons
	Wing	2 or more groups
	Numbered Air Force (NAF)	2 or more wings
	Major Command (MAJCOM)	1 or more NAFs
	Air Force	MAJCOMs report to Headquarters, Air Force
U.S. Marine Corps	Marine	individual
	Team	4 Marines
	Squad	3 teams
	Platoon	3 squads
	Company/Battery	3 platoons
	Battalion	3 companies/batteries
	Regiment/Brigade	3 battalions
	Division (MARDIV)	3 regiments/brigades
	Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF)	
	Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU)	Infantry battalion, aviation squadron, combat logistics battalion
	Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB)	Infantry regiment, Marine air group (MAG), combat logistics regiment (CLR)
	Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF)	Marine division (MARDIV), Marine aircraft wing (MAW), Marine logistics group (MLG)
	Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF)	Elements of MARDIV, MAW, MLG
USMC Aviation	Squadron	4-24 aircraft
	Group (MAG)	3 or more squadrons
	Wing (MAW)	3 or more groups

Table 2, Force structure (Cont.)

U.S. Navy

The Navy does not list unit designations in the same way as the other Services. While a Sailor may be assigned to a ship, which belongs to a carrier strike group, which falls under a fleet, all of those levels are not listed within a caption. If a Sailor is part of a ship-based aviation unit, be sure to list it.

Identify the ship or onshore unit to which a Sailor is assigned. Also identify lower-level unit demarcations, such as squadrons or detachments.

Identify the strike group to which a ship is assigned only if it is currently deployed with the strike group.

Table 3, Selected aircraft and vehicles

Bombers	B-52H Stratofortress; B-1B Lancer; B-2 Spirit
Cargo planes	C-130 Hercules; C-17 Globemaster III; C-5 Galaxy; C-27* Spartan
Combat search and rescue (CSAR)	HC-130 King; HC-130E; HC-130 Hercules; HC-130J; HC-130P/N
Fighter and attack aircraft	F-16* Fighting Falcon; F/A-18* Hornet; F/A-18 E or F Super Hornet; F-15 Eagle; F-15E Strike Eagle; F-22 Raptor; A-10 Thunderbolt II; F-35 Lightning II
Helicopters	AH-1Z Viper (USMC); AH-64D Apache Longbow; UH-60* Black Hawk; CH-47 Chinook; MH-47 Special Operations Aircraft; OH-58 Kiowa Warrior; UH-1* Huey; UH-1Y Venom (USMC); CH-53D Sea Stallion; CH-53E Super Stallion; H-3 Sea King; SH-60 Seahawk; VH-3D Sea King; HH-60G Pave Hawk; MH-53J/M Pave Low
Special mission	E-2 Hawkeye; E-3* Sentry; EA-6B Prowler; E-8 Joint STARS; EA-18G Growler; EC-130*; P-3C Orion; P-8A Poseidon; MC-130E/H Combat Talon I/II; MC-130P Combat Shadow; MC-130J Commando II; CV-22* Osprey (USAF); MV-22* Osprey (USMC); MQ-1 Predator; RQ-11 Raven; A-10/OA-10 Thunderbolt II; U-2; X-47B unmanned combat air vehicle (UCAV)
Tankers	KC-10 Extender; KC-135 Stratotanker; KC-130J Super Hercules
Amphibious	AAV7A1 assault amphibious vehicle (USMC)
MRAP vehicles	Category 1 (small): MaxxPro; Cougar H 4x4; Cheetah; RG-33; M1117 Guardian Armored Security Vehicle Category 2 (medium): MaxxPro; Cougar H 6x6; Golan; RG-33L mine-protected vehicle Category 3 (large): Buffalo mine-protected vehicle
Tracked vehicles	M1/M1A1/M1A2* Abrams tank; M2/M3 Bradley Fighting Vehicle; M88A2 Hercules recovery vehicle; M113 Armored Personnel Carrier
Wheeled vehicles	Humvee; Stryker armored vehicle; mine-resistant, ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicle
*Indicates that there is more than one version of this aircraft or vehicle; this is not the full designator.	

Table 4, Selected weapons

Antiarmor	Javelin shoulder-fired anti-tank missile; TOW missile system; M136E1 AT4-CS confined space light anti-armor weapon
Bombs	GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided bomb; GBU-31 joint direct attack munition; GBU-32 joint direct attack munition; GBU-15 guided weapon system; GBU-87 cluster bomb; GBU-43/B MOAB
Indirect fire	M102/M119 105 mm howitzer; M109A6 Paladin howitzer; M120/M121 120 mm mortar system; M198 155 mm howitzer; M224 60 mm mortar system; M252 81 mm mortar system; M777 towed 155 mm howitzer
Individual and crew-served	M2/M2HB/M2A1 machine gun; M4/M4A1 carbine, M9 Beretta pistol; M14 rifle; M14 Enhanced Battle Rifle; M16/M16A1/M16A2/M16A3/M16A4 rifle; M18 Claymore mine; XM25 grenade launcher; M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle; M107 .50-caliber Special Applications Scoped Rifle; M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System; M203/M203A1 grenade launcher; M240B machine gun; M249 light machine gun; Mark 19 40 mm grenade machine gun; M1911/M1911A1 pistol
Missiles	AGM-65 Maverick missile; AGM-86* air-launched cruise missile; AGM-88 high-speed anti-radiation missile (HARM); AGM-129A advanced cruise missile; AGM-130 air-to-surface missile; AGM-154 joint standoff weapon; AGM-158 joint air-to-surface standoff missile; AIM-7 Sparrow missile; AIM-9 Sidewinder missile; LGM-30G Minuteman III ICBM; Tomahawk cruise missile
*Indicates that there is more than one version of this weapon; this is not the full designator.	

Table 5, State names and abbreviations, per AP

Alabama	Ala.	Louisiana	La.	Ohio	Ohio
Alaska	Alaska	Maine	Maine	Oklahoma	Okla.
Arizona	Ariz.	Maryland	Md.	Oregon	Ore.
Arkansas	Ark.	Massachusetts	Mass.	Pennsylvania	Pa.
California	Calif.	Michigan	Mich.	Rhode Island	R.I.
Colorado	Colo.	Minnesota	Minn.	South Carolina	S.C.
Connecticut	Conn.	Mississippi	Miss.	South Dakota	S.D.
Delaware	Del.	Missouri	Mo.	Tennessee	Tenn.
Florida	Fla.	Montana	Mont.	Texas	Texas
Georgia	Ga.	Nebraska	Neb.	Utah	Utah
Hawaii	Hawaii	Nevada	Nev.	Vermont	Vt.
Idaho	Idaho	New Hampshire	N.H.	Virginia	Va.
Illinois	Ill.	New Jersey	N.J.	Washington	Wash.
Indiana	Ind.	New Mexico	N.M.	West Virginia	W.Va.
Iowa	Iowa	New York	N.Y.	Wisconsin	Wis.
Kansas	Kan.	North Carolina	N.C.	Wyoming	Wyo.
Kentucky	Ky.	North Dakota	N.D.		
The following states are not abbreviated: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah. Write the nation's capital as Washington, D.C.					

Table 6, Afghan provinces

Province	Provincial Center	Location	Notable cities/towns
Badakhshan	Fayzabad	northeast	
Badghis	Qala-e-Naw	west	
Baghlan	Pul-e-Khomri	northeast	
Balkh	Mazar-e-Sharif	northwest	
Bamiyan	Bamiyan	west	Panjab, Waras
Daykundi	Nili	southwest	
Farah	Farah	west	
Faryab	Meymaneh	northwest	Pashtun Kot, Qaysar
Ghazni	Ghazni	southeast	
Ghor	Chaghcharan	west	
Helmand	Lashkar Gah	southwest	Garmsir, Gereshk, Marjah, Musa Qala, Nawa-i-Barakzai, Sangin, Washir
Herat	Herat	west	Gulran, Guzara, Injil, Kushk, Sabzawar
Jowzjan	Sheberghan	northwest	
Kabul	Kabul	central	Paghman, Surobi
Kandahar	Kandahar	southwest	Daman, Shorabak, Spin Boldak
Kapisa	Mahmud-i-Raqi	central	Alasai, Mahmud-i-Raqi, Nijrab, Tagab
Khost	Khost	southeast	
Kunar	Asadabad	east	
Kunduz	Kunduz	northeast	Archi, Imam Sahib, Khan Abad, Qalay-i-Zal
Laghman	Mehtar Lam	east	
Logar	Pul-e-Alam	central	Padkhab Shana
Nangarhar	Jalalabad	east	Bihsud, Khogyani
Nimroz	Zaranj	southwest	
Nuristan	Parun	east	
Paktia	Gardez	southeast	Jaji, Zurmat
Paktika	Sharan	southeast	Margah
Panjshir	Bazarak	central	
Parwan	Charikar	central	Bagram, Pul-e-Sayad
Samangan	Aybak	northwest	
Sar-e Pul	Sar-e Pul	northwest	
Takhar	Taloqan	northeast	
Uruzgan	Tirin Kot	southwest	
Wardak	Maydan Shahr	central	Saydabad
Zabul	Qalat	southeast	

Note: **Afghan** is the term for the people and culture of Afghanistan.
Afghani is the Afghan unit of currency.

Table 7, Metadata cross references

The following provides a cross reference for the field names in four commonly used captioning software programs. Captioning for video, which provides instructions on what to include in each field, uses the MediaGrid field names as subchapter titles. If you have no captioning software, include this information in a Word file.

SCC MediaGrid	Photoshop	Photo Mechanic	Nikon View	Field Contents for DoD Imagery
PH Rank & Name	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Contact/ Creator	PH Rank/ Name	Author	The photographer's rank and full name. (32 character limit)
PH Home Unit	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Contact/ Creator's Job Title	PH Home Unit	Author's Position	The photographer's home unit. (32 character limit)
Date Shot	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Image/ Date Created	Not Used	Date Created	The date the image was taken. This date must match the date in the VIRIN. (8 character limit)
Base/Locale	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Image/ City	Base/Locale	City	The base locale or city of the shoot. (32 character limit)
State/Prov.	CS3 - IPTC/IPTC Image/State CS2/CS4/CS5 - IPTC Image/State/Province	State/Prov.	State/ Province	The state or province of the shoot. (32 character limit)
Country/ Area	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Image/ Country	Country/Area	Country	The country or area of the shoot; for aerials, use either the country or the ocean area being flown over. (64 character limit)
Operation/ Exercise Name	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Content/ Headline	Operation/ Exercise Name	Headline	The name of the operation or exercise. If not part of an official operation or exercise, leave blank.
Caption	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Content/ Description	Caption	Caption	The caption block should contain a caption and tag line written in accordance with this guide.
Keyword	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Content/ Keywords	Keywords	Keywords	Insert appropriate keywords as instructed in Chapter 3.
Caption Editor	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Content/ Description Writer	Caption Editor	Caption Writer	The name of the individual editing the caption, if different than the photographer. (32 character limit)

SCC MediaGrid	Photoshop	Photo Mechanic	Nikon View	Field Contents for DoD Imagery
VIRIN	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/ Title	VIRIN	Title	Enter the Visual Information Record Identification Number Example: 060515-M-AB123-001 VIRIN Components: - 060514 - Date the image was shot (in YYMMDD format) - M - Photographer's branch of Service (see Service shown field below) - AB123 - Photographer's Vision ID - 001 - Sequence number (Sequence numbers restart at 001 each day, not each shoot)
Command Shown	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/Job Identifier	Command Shown	Trans-mission Reference	Enter the combatant command where the image was taken (USPACOM, USEUCOM, etc.).
Public Release Instructions	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/ Instructions	Public Release Instructions	Instructions	Enter the public release authority information. - If an approved public release authority has released the image, insert "Released" and the name, rank, unit, phone and email contact information of the release authority. - If the image is explicitly not cleared for public release, insert "Not Released" and the name, rank, unit, phone and email contact information of the release authority. - If a release authority has not reviewed the image, insert "Not Reviewed." Also include the plan to get it reviewed as well as contact information (email and/or phone).

SCC MediaGrid	Photoshop	Photo Mechanic	Nikon View	Field Contents for DoD Imagery
PH TDY Unit	CS2/CS3/CS4 - IPTC/IPTC Status/Provider CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/Credit Line	PH TDY	Credit	The unit to which the photographer was temporarily assigned during the shoot (must be on official orders). If not assigned, then leave blank.
Image Source	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/ Source	Image Source	Source	The medium used to capture the image; either digital or film is entered here (do not enter the film type or camera model).
Service Shown	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - Categories/Category	Service Shown	Category	Enter the code for the Service branch of the subjects in the image. A: Army C: Coalition D: Department of Defense F: Air Force G: Coast Guard J: Joint/multi-Service K: Foreign L: Multinational M: Marine Corps N: Navy O: Other Z: National Guard
Supplemental Category	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - Categories/ Supplemental Categories	Email/Phone	Supplemental Categories	This field contains three pieces of information: The classification of the image; the classification authority; and contact information for the photographer at his/her current location. - Most images have a classification of Unclassified. If classified, enter the classification in accordance with the Controlled Access Program Coordination Center (CAPCO) Register. - Always enter email or telephone contact information at the temporary duty location.

Chapter 5
Captioning basics

The ABCs

To write an effective caption, remember the ABCs of captioning: *accuracy, brevity* and *clarity*.

Accuracy. Ensure every piece of information within the caption is accurate and complete. This also includes ensuring the captions are grammatically and stylistically accurate and that they adhere to the guidance contained in this guide and the *Associated Press Stylebook*. An accurate caption helps ensure an image is newsworthy, is of historical value and can be more easily retrieved from databases.

Brevity. When writing a caption, be certain every word is necessary to tell the story of the image. The caption should describe precisely what is seen in the image. Captions must convey a great deal of information in a few short sentences, so they must be written concisely to maximize their effectiveness. Do not use 15 words where five will do.

Clarity. To be understood by the end user, a caption must be clear in both intent and expression. Select language to make certain the reader will understand what is happening in the image. Remember that the audience for DoD imagery is global. Construct captions that can be understood by a nonmilitary reader.

The 5 Ws

When gathering information to include in a caption, keep the following questions in mind: **who, what, when, where** and **why**. All questions must be answered to accurately communicate the story of a still image or video clip.

Who Who or what is the subject of the image?

• If the subject of a sentence is a person or persons, provide the rank, first and last name, title and military unit for each person.
• List units from smallest to largest. (e.g., *U.S. Marines assigned to Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division clean weapons at Camp Pendleton, Calif., June 7, 2012.*)
• When identifying named Service members, include the name of the Service to which he or she belongs. (e.g., *U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard*)

> U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. John Brown inspects an F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft.
> U.S. Navy Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Joe Smith cleans a .50-caliber machine gun.

• If it's a group of Service members or an unidentified person, use the appropriate singular or collective noun associating them with their particular branch of service (e.g., *Soldier/Soldiers, Sailor/Sailors, Airman/Airmen, Marine/Marines, Coast Guardsman/Guardsmen*). NOTE: Do not use the name of the Service in conjunction with the associated noun, such as *U.S. Army Soldier* or *U.S. Marine Corps Marine.*

> U.S. Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment prepare for a live-fire range.
> A U.S. Marine with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit conducts physical training.

• Every effort should be made to identify the subject of a photo. People appearing in the background need not be identified unless they are essential to the story of the image.

If the subject of the image is an object, provide the equipment name and model, name and ship hull number, or name and model of the aircraft or vehicle. Include both the name of the object (e.g., *C-17 Globemaster III*) as well as what kind of object it is (e.g., *aircraft*).

> A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III aircraft taxis before takeoff.
>
> The aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) gets underway.
>
> *Note: Do not include a hyphen between the letters and numbers in the hull number.*

To find the proper way to list a particular vehicle, weapon system or aircraft, refer to fact sheets available on Service-specific websites (see page 47). Also, see the list of selected vehicles in Table 3, Selected military aircraft and vehicles, on page 25, and the list of selected weapons in Table 4, page 26.

What Describe the action captured by the imagery.

Use active voice when describing the action. When writing in active voice, the subject is doing something, while in passive voice, something is being done to the subject. To change from active to passive voice, make the object of the sentence (person or thing acting on the subject) the subject and vice versa.

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Active vs. Passive Voice

Active: U.S. Soldiers destroy confiscated ordnance.

Passive: Confiscated ordnance is destroyed by U.S. Soldiers.

</div>

When describing the *what*, do not over-describe the action; let the image speak as well. For example, look at the following image and read the two sample captions.

Incorrect: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. James Foster, right, with the 736th Security Forces Squadron, checks the status of an entry control point **using radio communications** at Williamson Airfield, Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia, July 22, 2013.

Correct: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. James Foster, right, with the 736th Security Forces Squadron, checks the status of an entry control point at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia, July 22, 2013.

In the first example, the *what* is *checks the status of an entry control point using radio communications*. In the second, it is simply *checks the status of an entry control point*. Looking again at the image, nothing is lost by using the shorter description of the second caption. The information given in the first caption is apparent in the image itself.

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Style Check: Dates

- Use month, day, year format.
- Do not include *on* before the date.
- Do not use the day of the week.
- Do not use datelines.

</div>

When Provide the date and, if pertinent, the time of day when the image was captured. Include the date within the caption. Do *not* use datelines, which are headers placed before the start of the caption, often containing the date and location of the image.

Use the following format: Aug. 21, 2011. Spell out months March through July and abbreviate months August through February.

When writing just a month and year with no day, do not abbreviate the month: *Feb. 27, 2011*, but *February 2011*.

Where Provide the geographic location as well as the name of the base, facility or organization, if applicable. Consult the *Associated Press Stylebook* entry on *datelines* to determine if a city stands alone in captions.

- If there is no city, give a region or general area (e.g., *near the Syrian border* or *off the coast of Southern California*).
- If the image was captured on a ship, provide the ship name as well as where it is moored or underway. For example: *off the coast of …* or *underway in the Pacific Ocean*.
- If it is an undisclosed location, state that within the caption and metadata.
- Do not use the word *here* in place of a location in a caption.

Spell out state names when they stand alone within the caption. Use abbreviations when paired with a city or base/installation. See Table 5, State names and abbreviations, on page 26 for a list of state abbreviations.

Why Explain the purpose of the event, exercise or operation depicted in the image. This gives context to the image and answers the question as to why the image matters. The explanation should be brief, in most cases no longer than one sentence. See sample captions on page 35.

Constructing a caption

The first sentence contains the 5 Ws and is always written in the present tense using active voice. A caption describes the moment the image is captured, not what came before or after, so the first sentence will be written as if from that moment.

Subsequent sentences should almost always be written in past tense. This sentence gives background information on the image. It explains why the image is significant and places it in a larger context. When providing background information in a caption, include information that explains the significance of the *action in the image.*

Example:

> U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. John Smith demonstrates proper CPR techniques during his unit's safety day at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., July 5, 2011. *Smith's unit was training in advanced first aid techniques in preparation for a deployment.*

Examine the following picture and sample caption:

In the caption, the background sentences describe why the Germantown and the 31st Marine Expeditionary

U.S. Marines with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit board Landing Craft Utility 1627 in the well deck of the forward-deployed amphibious dock landing ship USS Germantown (LSD 42) Feb. 10, 2012, off the coast of Thailand. The Germantown was underway in support of Cobra Gold 2012. Cobra Gold is a regularly scheduled joint/combined exercise designed to ensure regional peace and strengthen the ability of the Royal Thai Armed Forces to defend Thailand or respond to regional contingencies. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Johnie Hickmon/Released)

Unit were off the coast of Thailand (for exercise Cobra Gold). While this is important information, it does not give background information on the action in the image, which is Marines boarding a landing craft utility. A more appropriate second sentence would explain why the Marines were boarding the craft. Presuming we know why, the caption could read:

> U.S. Marines with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit board Landing Craft Utility 1627 in the well deck of the forward-deployed amphibious dock landing ship USS Germantown (LSD 42) Feb. 10, 2012, off the coast of Thailand. **The Marines were preparing to go ashore in Thailand as part of exercise Cobra Gold 2012.**

Additional rules of construction

Define all acronyms on first use within the caption. Spell out the term, and then place the acronym in parentheses. Use only the acronym on second use.

- **Do not use acronyms for terms used only once within the caption.**
- Do not use apostrophes when using a plural acronym. For example: *MREs*, not *MRE's*; *F-15s*, not *F-15's.*
- Refer to the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms for official definitions of abbreviations and acronyms (see Chapter 9, Additional resources, on page 47). Acronyms need not

appear in the DoD dictionary to be used in a caption.

Avoid the use of jargon. Explain terms and practices that are not commonly known outside of military circles. Remember to write for a nonmilitary audience. For example, do not use shorthand references to military units unless they have been previously defined within the caption.

> *Incorrect:* 2-8 Infantry Regiment
>
> *Correct:* 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment

Do not editorialize. Stick to the facts as presented by the image and gathered at the scene. In the following example, the first caption contains editorializing.

ID by placement. When identifying people in an image, use the rule of three; provide the full name and

> *Incorrect:* An Iraqi family enjoys a picnic in a park near the Baghdad Zoo in the Karkh district of Baghdad March 30, 2007. Scenes like this one are becoming more prevalent in the city as life slowly returns to normal.
>
> *Correct:* An Iraqi family shares a picnic in a park near the Baghdad Zoo in the Karkh district of Baghdad March 30, 2007.

rank and/or title of every person when there are three or fewer people in the image. It is not necessary to individually identify everyone if there are four or more people present, although there may be some cases (such as with high-level officials) in which that would be appropriate.

Indicate position in a caption using commas, not parentheses. The following examples demonstrate two correct ways to indicate position.

No quotes. Do not quote people within the body of a caption. Direct quotations are best used in a press

> U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John Brown, left, and Spc. Carl Anderson, both assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, participate in a training exercise at Fort Pickett, Va., Jan. 5, 2013.
>
> From left, U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, British Defense Secretary Philip Hammond and their aides meet at the Pentagon in Arlington, Va., May 6, 2012.

release, cover story or article.

Do *not* include the names of minor dependents of military members. Do *not* include the names of U.S. citizens, including Service members, receiving medical treatment without the express written consent of the patient.

Photographer's credit

Include the photographer's credit and the release status (Released, Not Released or Not Reviewed) of the image at the end of the caption. See examples below.

NOTE: If the image is Not Reviewed, the photographer must send information describing a plan to get imagery reviewed, as well as contact information. See page 18, under Public Release Instructions.

If the photographer is a member of the Army National Guard or Air National Guard, indicate it in the credit line, but do not use the state or territory name: (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Bob Smith/Released)

If the photographer is from a non-U.S. service, credit it as a DoD photo, listing the photographer's rank, name and service affiliation before the release status.

> ### Examples of photographers' credit lines
>
> (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. John Smith/Released)
> (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Bill Miller/Not Released)
> (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Jane Johnson/Not Reviewed)
> (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Betty Jones/Released)
> (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Juan Silva/Not Released)
> (DoD photo by Ralph Williams/Not Reviewed)
> (DoD photo by Cpl. Mike Johnson, Canadian Army/Released)

Style Check: Sample captions and keywords

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Juan Martinez, left, assigned to the 50th Aerial Port Squadron (APS), and Staff Sgt. Oscar Cortes, with the 56th APS, secure a truck aboard a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft Nov. 1, 2012, at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. The aircraft flew vehicles and repair crews to Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, N.Y., to support recovery efforts after Hurricane Sandy struck New Jersey and New York City Oct. 29, 2012. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jacquelyn Estrada/Released)
Keywords: USAF; Airman; C-17 Globemaster III; Aircraft; 50th APS; 56th APS

A U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter assigned to the Colorado Army National Guard flies to perform a water drop while fighting the Black Forest Fire near Colorado Springs, Colo., June 12, 2013. The Black Forest Fire started June 11, 2013, burning scores of homes and forcing large-scale evacuations. The Colorado National Guard and U.S. Air Force Reserve assisted in firefighting efforts. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Capt. Darin Overstreet/Released)
Keywords: USAF; CONG; COARNG; COANG; ARNG; ANG; USA; UH-60 Black Hawk; Helicopter; Firefighting; Soldier

U.S. Navy Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) Airman Justin Bryan ducks as an F/A-18E Super Hornet aircraft assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 14 launches from the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) Oct. 21, 2012, in the Arabian Sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kenneth Abbate/Released)
Keywords: USN; Sailor; Aviation Boatswain's Mate; F/A-18E Super Hornet; Aircraft; Aircraft carrier; Nimitz-class; USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74); VFA-14; Flight operations

U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Brandon Mann scans an area through the scope of an M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle while providing security with his military working dog, Ty, around the villages of Sre Kala and Paygel in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 17, 2012. Mann, a military working dog handler, and Ty, an improvised explosive device detection dog, were assigned to Alpha Company, 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Alfred V. Lopez/Released)
Keywords: USMC; Marine; M27 IAR; MWD; Security; OEF; 1st LAR BN

U.S. Coast Guardsmen assigned to the medium endurance cutter USCGC Northland (WMEC 904) maneuver during the interdiction of 3,532 pounds of cocaine from a 35-foot go-fast vessel in the Caribbean Sea March 3, 2012, as part of Operation Martillo. The cocaine's wholesale value was estimated at more than $43 million. (U.S. Coast Guard photo/Released)
Keywords: USCG; Coast Guardsman; Medium endurance cutter; USCGC Northland (WMEC 904); Famous-class; Law enforcement; Drug trafficking; Illicit drugs

U.S. Soldiers with the 82nd Airborne Division jump from an Air Force C-17 Globemaster III aircraft during Large Package Week/Joint Operational Access Exercise (LPW/JOAX) 13-01 Oct. 11, 2012, at Fort Bragg, N.C. LPW/JOAX is a joint Army and Air Force training exercise held several times a year to practice large-scale airdrop missions for personnel and equipment. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Joanna Hensley/Released)
Keywords: USA; Soldier; USAF; C-17 Globemaster III; Aircraft; T-10 parachute; 82nd ABN DIV; Airborne operations; Training; Joint; LPW; JOAX

Chapter 6
Grammar review

Good captions are difficult to write without a solid foundation in the principles that govern sentence construction. The following review of basic grammar rules will help writers and editors produce clear, effective captions.

Sentence structure

A *sentence* is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate. It is a complete thought that can stand alone. The *subject* is a noun or noun phrase, and is what the sentence is about. In captioning parlance, it is the "who." The *predicate* is what is being written about the subject. This includes the verb, or action, of the sentence as well as other people or objects that the subject acts upon. When writing any sentence, begin with these building blocks: subject-verb-object. Place all supplementary information around this fundamental structure.

> U.S. Soldiers patrol a neighborhood.

In the above sentence, the subject is "U.S. Soldiers" and the predicate contains both the action of the sentence, "patrol," and the object of the action, "a neighborhood."

Avoid sentence fragments. A *sentence fragment* is an incomplete sentence; it is usually either missing a subject or a verb or is not a complete thought. Fragments usually occur when captioning images that at first glance appear to show no action (e.g., images of equipment, geographic locations or local color). Assign an action, the "what," to the image to ensure a complete sentence.

> **Fragment:** The aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) during a training exercise in the Pacific Ocean June 22, 2011.
>
> **Sentence:** The aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) participates in a training exercise in the Pacific Ocean June 22, 2011.

Avoid run-on sentences. A *run-on sentence* contains two or more independent clauses (word groups that can stand alone as a sentence) that are joined without either a semicolon or a comma and a linking word.

> **Run-on:** The Sailors returned home from a six-month deployment and they celebrated when their ship moored pierside.
>
> Fix the sentence with either a comma/linking word or a semicolon:
>
> - The Sailors returned home from a six-month deployment**, and** they celebrated when their ship moored pierside.
> - The Sailors returned home from a six-month deployment**;** they celebrated when their ship moored pierside.

Do not start a sentence with a number. The only exception to this rule is when starting a sentence with a year; however, avoid this when possible. Usually it can be fixed by adding a word at the start of the sentence.

> **Incorrect:** 1st Marine Division is engaged in operations in the Anbar province of Iraq.
>
> **Correct:** The 1st Marine Division is engaged in operations in the Anbar province of Iraq.

Punctuation

Apostrophes Use apostrophes to indicate possession or in contractions; do not use to indicate a noun is plural.

> ***Incorrect:*** unexploded mortar's outside Kabul
>
> ***Correct plural:*** unexploded mortars outside Kabul
>
> ***Correct possessive:*** unexploded mortars' disposal date

With acronyms, use an apostrophe only to indicate a possessive. Add a lowercase *s* to make an acronym plural.

> ***Plural:*** The COs met to discuss the mission.
>
> ***Possessive:*** At the CO's request, they discussed the mission.

Remember that *its* indicates possession, while *it's* is a contraction of *it is*.

Commas in a series The appropriate use of commas makes it easier to read a sentence. Comma placement is determined partially by grammar rules and partially through judgment.

Use commas to separate each element in a series. For example: *The flag is red, white and blue.* Use a comma before the conjunction (known as the serial comma) only when necessary to avoid confusion, such as in the following example: *The vessel performs utility boat functions such as submarine support, moving barges and floats, and personnel transfers.*

If any of the elements in a series contain commas, use semicolons instead. For example: *Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel; U.S. Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Secretary of State John Kerry met to discuss defense policy.*

Commas and clauses When joining two word groups that can stand alone as separate sentences, use a comma before a coordinating conjunction or use a semicolon with no conjunction. Do not use a comma if one of the clauses is dependent (does not stand alone as a complete sentence).

> The building is finished, but it has no furniture.
>
> The building is finished; it has no furniture.
>
> The building is finished but has no furniture.

Use a comma after introductory clauses or phrases. Such clauses usually tell when, where, why or how the main action of the sentence occurs. For example: *After sharing a meal, the Airmen will resume training.*

Not every clause that appears to be independent requires a comma. For example: *Jake does not realize that his injury is serious and that he will have to undergo therapy to get better.*

Note that a ship's name is not a clause; do not separate it from the sentence with commas.

Commas and adjectives Separate coordinate adjectives with commas (coordinate adjectives modify the noun in the same way). For example: *She was a strong, loyal, well-trained Marine.* Each adjective describes the Marine.

Do not separate cumulative adjectives (cumulative adjectives must stay in order to make sense). For example: *Three large brown camels moved toward the convoy.*

How to tell the difference? Put the word "and" between each adjective and reverse the order of the adjectives. If the sentence still makes sense, use commas.

That/which Use *that* for essential information; do not separate with a comma. Use *which* for nonessential elements; use commas to set off the clause. For example:

> The Airmen needed a uniform that was wash and wear.
>
> The Airmen needed new boots, which are expensive.

How to tell the difference? If you were to remove a restrictive element from a sentence, it would significantly change its meaning. Use this rule to know which to use. In the first example above, the fact that the uniform must be wash and wear is essential to understanding the sentence. In the second, the fact that the boots are expensive is additional information; the essence of the sentence is that the Airmen need new boots.

Commas and titles Titles and other identifying adjectives listed after a name should be separated with commas; those listed before the name are adjectives and do not require commas.

> Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno visits with troops.
>
> Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, the chief of staff of the Army, visits with troops.

Commas and dates Do not automatically separate the date from the rest of the sentence. Comma usage is determined by what precedes the date (e.g., a state or a country). Remember to put a comma after the year in a complete date unless it ends the sentence.

> U.S. Marines with Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment conduct a security halt July 9, 2010, in Zaidon, Iraq.
>
> Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel holds a press conference at the Pentagon in Arlington, Va., Dec. 5, 2010.
>
> The marine vessel Blue Marlin enters Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Jan. 9, 2011, with the Sea-based X-Band Radar aboard.

Commas and quantity Use a comma in numbers showing quantity (e.g., 1,200 troops, but 1200 hours).

Hyphens Use a hyphen to connect compound adjectives. A compound adjective is two terms that together act as one descriptor for a noun.

Note that the examples to the right are hyphenated only when used as compound adjectives. For example: *The troops were forward deployed.*

Use a hyphen to join some prefixes/suffixes and root words, such as anti-terrorism, anti-aircraft or DoD-wide.

> **Examples of compound adjectives**
>
> - Forward-deployed location
> - Nuclear-powered aircraft carrier
> - Fixed-wing aircraft

If a unit number follows its unabbreviated name, then the name of that unit will generally be hyphenated in its abbreviated form. Some examples of unit types that are hyphenated in their abbreviated forms:

- Navy and Marine Corps squadrons (VAW-77, HMH-464, etc.)
- Marine Corps combat logistics battalions (CLB-6, etc.)
- Naval mobile construction battalions (NMCB-1, etc.)
- Navy explosive ordnance mobile units (EODMU-1, etc.)

Periods Use a period when abbreviating military titles. For example: *Tech. Sgt. James Cooper.* Refer to Table 1, Military rank abbreviations, on pages 21 and 22 for more information. When typing copy, use only one space after the period at the end of the sentence.

Mechanics

Prefixes Refer to *The Associated Press Stylebook* or *Webster's New World College Dictionary* for guidance on whether or not to hyphenate a word with a prefix. This section provides guidance for terms that commonly appear in DoD captions.

In most cases, prefixes join with the root word without a hyphen (see box to the right).

Hyphenate words with the prefix *self-*. For example: *self-controlled, self-taught, self-defense.*

> **Take off/takeoff**
>
> Two F/A-18F Super Hornet aircraft prepare to take off.
>
> A U.S. Air Force pilot prepares for takeoff.
>
> **Set up/setup**
>
> U.S. Soldiers set up for a medical operation.
>
> U.S. Soldiers review setup procedures for a medical operation.

In most cases, hyphenate if the prefix ends in a vowel and the root word begins with a vowel (*de-ice, pre-existing, re-enlist*).

There are a few exceptions to these rules, such as: *cooperate, coordinate, pre-dawn, pre-position* (meaning to position personnel and equipment before acting), *pre-deployment, counter improvised explosive device* and *multi-Service.*

Suffixes Refer to *The Associated Press Stylebook* or *Webster's New World College Dictionary* for guidance on whether or not to hyphenate a word with a suffix.

In general, adjectives with the suffix *-wide* are one word. For example: *basewide*, not *base-wide* or *base wide*. When attaching the suffix to an acronym, use a hyphen, as in *DoD-wide*.

> U.S. personnel go over check-in and checkout procedures.
>
> U.S. personnel check in to their new units after completing check out of their equipment.

Compound words Several terms can be either one or two words, depending on the use. In most cases, when used as a verb, they are two words, and when used as a noun or an adjective, they are one word. These rules apply to several other common terms, such as stand down/standdown; line up/lineup; take out/takeout.

The terms *onload* and *offload* are one word in all cases. However, the words are jargon, so use *load* or *unload* instead whenever possible.

The terms *check-in* and *checkout* are treated differently. Use *check-in* as a noun and adjective, *check in* as a verb. Use *checkout* as a noun and adjective, but *check out* as a verb.

Capitalization

U.S. and foreign military Capitalize service branch names when referring to U.S. forces; do not capitalize when referring to foreign military. For instance, it is *U.S. Army*, but *British army*; *Iraqi police,* not *Iraqi Police.*

Capitalize the proper names of foreign military branches: *British Royal Air Force*, not *British Royal air force*. However, in accordance with the rule above, the common noun would be *British air force*. In the same vein, it is *Afghan National Army*, or *Afghan army*.

Capitalize *Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine* and *Coast Guardsman* when referring to U.S. forces (*U.S. Soldiers*, but *Dutch soldiers*). However, *cadet* and *midshipman* are ranks, so capitalize them only when they're used

before a name.

Do not capitalize *airman* or *airmen* when referring to unnamed Navy personnel; in that case, the term is part of a generic rank/rate. (e.g., *U.S. Navy airmen stand in formation.)* However, when it's used as part of a Sailor's rating, it is capitalized. (e.g., *U.S. Navy Aviation Ordnanceman Airman John Smith salutes an officer*.)

Capitalize a rank or title (such as *commanding officer*) when it precedes a name; use lowercase when it follows a name, is set off by commas or stands alone.

> U.S. Marine Corps Gen. John R. Allen, the commander of the International Security Assistance Force, arrives at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, March 22, 2012.
>
> U.S. Army Capt. James T. Kirk, the commander of Alpha Company, visited an outpost every Tuesday.
>
> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Navy Adm. Mike Mullen speaks with Service members.

Proper nouns A proper noun names a particular person, place or thing. Capitalize all proper nouns, to include names of people, organizations, operations and exercises (e.g., *Sgt. Sharon Anderson, Department of Defense, New Dawn, Cobra Gold*).

Common nouns A common noun names categories of persons, places or things.

> *Incorrect:* They were overrun by Security Forces during an Operational Readiness Exercise.
>
> *Correct:* They were overrun by security forces during an operational readiness exercise.
>
> *Incorrect:* The Female Engagement Team leaders met with the new members of the Provincial Reconstruction Team.
>
> *Correct:* The female engagement team leaders met with the new members of the provinical reconstruction team.

Capitalize common nouns only if they are part of a proper noun, such as a title or an organization (e.g., *U.S. Embassy, Operation New Dawn*).

A general rule is if there is more than one of something, do not capitalize.

All caps Do not use all capital letters for anything but acronyms. Ship names, release status and other terms should all be regular text. For example:

> *The hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) moors off the coast of El Salvador Nov. 5, 2011. The ship was on a four-month humanitarian mission. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class John Smith/Released)*

> *Incorrect:* Forward Operating Base (FOB)
>
> *Correct:* forward operating base (FOB)
>
> *Correct:* Forward Operating Base (FOB) Walton

Acronyms Acronyms are capitalized, but the terms to which they refer are only capitalized if they are proper nouns. Do not capitalize a term solely because it is assigned an acronym.

Chapter 7
Captioning motion imagery

When writing captions for motion imagery, all the rules in the preceding chapters on style and content apply. The descriptive information provided will necessarily be broader since the caption must describe more than a single image. Provide captions for the sequence and for each shot.

Caption information will appear on both the slate and a caption sheet such as DD Form 2537 (Visual Information Caption Sheet) or in a similar format (also known as a run sheet).

Slate

All video sequences should include a slate at the front of the sequence that contains:

- VIRIN
- Videographer name and rank
- Videographer contact information (email and/or phone)
- The release status of the video: Released, Not Released, or Not Reviewed
- The name, rank and contact information of the releasing authority
- A brief description of the sequence (examples follow)

> U.S. Soldiers with the 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment collect biometric information from Afghan citizens in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, Feb. 7, 2010.
>
> U.S. Sailors conduct flight operations aboard the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) while underway in the Indian Ocean July 21, 2011.

The placement of a slate on the video sequence does not replace the requirement to send a caption sheet with the video, either using DD Form 2537 or a text file.

A sample sequence caption slate:

:Unclassified and RELEASED: Dec. 26, 2010

101226-F-ZZ999-001   RT 02:17

2-12 Field Artillery On Patrol

U.S. Soldiers assigned to Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Field Artillery Regiment conduct a routine foot patrol in Khost province, Afghanistan, Dec. 26, 2010. The unit routinely conducts joint patrols with their Afghan National Army counterparts. (U.S. Air Force video by Staff Sgt. Sarah Smith/Released)

VI Professional: Cleared by:
Staff Sgt. Sarah Smith   Sgt. Rob Davis, MNCI
1st Combat Camera Squadron   PAO/28th PAD
DSN 318-855-5921   DSN 318-822-1111
sarah.smith@address.mil   rob.davis@address.mil

A sample shot caption slate:

:Unclassified and NOT RELEASED: Dec. 26, 2010

101226-A-OU812-001   RT 02:17

Defense Language Institute graduates Arabic class 10-006

00:02:01 MS – U.S. Army Lt. Col. John Smith, the commanding officer of the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, presents a diploma to Pvt. Joe Dean. (Released)

00:02:08 MS – U.S. Army Lt. Col. John Smith presents a diploma to Navy Seaman Frank Smith. (Released)

00:02:15 LS – Graduates march in review. (Not Released)

VI Professional: Cleared by:
Davy Jones   Tom Jones
Presidio of Monterey Public Affairs Office   Presidio of Monterey PAO
831-236-4230   831-236-4230
davy.jones@address.mil   tom.jones@address.mil

DD Form 2537 - Visual Information Caption Sheet

To view a properly completed DD 2537, see page 43.

Shot captions. Shot captions are shot-by-shot breakdowns of the video sequence. Include information that is pertinent only to that section of time code.

Place the time code in hour/minute/second format.

Include changes of camera field of view. Use the following abbreviations to indicate camera field of view: ES – Establishing Shot; LS – Long Shot; MS – Medium Shot; CU – Close Up; ECU – Extreme Close Up.

Place release status at the end of each shot caption.

Sequence caption. A sequence caption describes the contents of the entire video sequence. Clearly identify the documented activity. Include the date and place the video was shot.

Include the full name, rank and title of the person or people featured only if included in the entire video sequence. Include the full name and model number of all featured equipment, vehicles, aircraft or ships if included in the entire video sequence. If not featured in the entire video sequence, place information about people, equipment, vehicles, aircraft and ships in the shot captions.

Briefly explain the purpose of the event, exercise or operation. Why is the documented action happening and/or why is it significant?

Include public release status and instructions at the end of the sequence caption.

Sample DD Form 2537

CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE
Unclassified

VISUAL INFORMATION CAPTION SHEET

1. PROJECT/EXERCISE/EVENT TITLE Rim of the Pacific - F/A-18 Aerial refueling	2. VIRIN 100709-F-ZZ999-002	3. DATE RECORDED *(YYMMDD)* 100709
4. CAMERA OPERATOR *(Rank/Name/Home Unit)* MSgt John Yossarian / Hickam AFB, HI	5. MEDIA/FILM TYPE Mini DV	6. TAPE/ROLL/DISC NUMBER 001

7. CLASSIFICATION OF MEDIA Unclassified	8. CLASSIFICATION OF CAPTION Unclassified	9. CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY Capt. Bill Aardvark, 43AF PA, DSN 555-1212 bill.aardvark@address.mil

10. SYNOPSIS/COVER STORY

a. LOCATION Hickam AFB, HI	b. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT/ACTIVITY/EXERCISE/EVENT

Members of the 465th Aerial Refueling Squadron refuel Navy F/A-18 Hornets in support of the Rim of the Pacific exercise 2012. B-ROLL ONLY.

Released by: Capt. Bill Aardvark, 43AF PA, DSN 555-1212 bill.aardvark@address.mil

11. INDIVIDUAL IMAGERY DESCRIPTIONS	a. CAMERA NUMBER	
b. TIME CODE: HR:MIN:SEC/ NEG-SLIDE NUMBER	**c. DESCRIPTION** *(Who, what, when, where, how, and why)*	**d. CLASSIFICATION OF SCENE/ IMAGE**
00:00:06:00	Slate	Unclassified
00:00:35:01	Seq: 465th ARS crewmembers conduct crew brief	
00:00:56:24	Seq: 465th ARS crewmwmbers conduct preflight inspection of KC-135R	
00:01:15:11	Seq: Taxi and takeoff shot from jump seat on flight deck	
00:02:54:12	Seq: Climb out over Diamond Head and refueling ops over Pacific Ocean	

DD Form 2537, FEB 94   Previous edition is obsolete.

CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE
Unclassified

Adobe Designer 7.0

Chapter 8
Manipulation and alteration policies and disclosure

The Department of Defense has a responsibility to maintain total credibility when sharing information with the American people, and that extends to ensuring DoD imagery meets or exceeds the highest ethical standards used by the DoD and the news industry.

As imagery technology continues to advance, it is imperative that DoD photographers maintain the highest ethical standards by presenting images that accurately depict a scene and subject as seen by the eye and recorded in the camera. Photographers must acknowledge any manipulations beyond acceptable photojournalistic practices (e.g., standard color correction, brightness, contrast and cropping).

DoD Instruction 5040.02, Enclosure 10, Section 4 states, in part: "*The undisclosed modification or enhancement of official DoD imagery by persons acting for or on behalf of the DoD is prohibited. Any and all image modification or enhancement for any purpose must be disclosed in the caption data so that the image does not mislead or deceive.*"

EXCEPTIONS: Standard color and contrast adjustments do not need to be disclosed. Occasionally, there will be images that show Personally Identifiable Information (PII), such as identification tags or access badges. It is permissible to obscure such information using digital means, *as long as it is made clear within the caption of the image* that portions of the image were blurred for security or privacy concerns.

There are numerous ways to manipulate an image in a darkroom or using digital means; while the end product may accurately represent a theme or subject, it's still not what was seen by the camera eye at the time the shutter was clicked.

The responsibility lies with the photographer — and anyone else involved in the processing of an image — to disclose manipulations above and beyond standard color adjustments.

Rule of thumb: *If you think you need to disclose manipulation techniques used on an image, do so.*

Here are several general categories of disclosable manipulations above and beyond the realm of standard color and contrast adjustments:

Photo illustrations and alterations

Photo illustrations are images that have been manipulated beyond acceptable corrections for color, lighting, darkening or cropping, whether for aesthetic, artistic or other purposes such as highlighting a theme. Photo illustrations also include images that have been retouched, filtered or are manipulated in any other way; images that are stitched together or contain cutouts, collages, panoramas, frames or added text/graphics are considered photo illustrations. The movement or addition of any content or elements within the image must be fully disclosed.

High Dynamic Range (HDR) photography, which is a fairly new technique where multiple images are recorded of the same scene, exposing for different details within the image. The images are then composited to produce an image that has increased dynamic range that approximates or exceeds that seen by the human eye. While HDR imagery can be visually stunning, it is a form of manipulation, and must be disclosed accordingly. NOTE: Each component image of an HDR image also shall be sent to DIMOC simultaneously with the HDR image, if the camera allows for it (some newer cameras automatically save the various exposures as a single image file).

There are a wide range of applications, or "apps," for iPhones and other electronic devices that allow a shooter to take an image and automatically filter it to resemble, for example, an older Polaroid, Kodachrome or sepia-toned shot. Although it usually requires little or no added effort from the photographer, the saved image is fundamentally altered from what the camera actually recorded. The

use of such apps must be disclosed.

Proper disclosure of manipulations

In short, if an image has been manipulated above and beyond basic color corrections, it must be labeled as such after the caption, as seen in the examples below:

>*Caption text.* (U.S. Army photo illustration by Sgt. Terry Cummings/Released) (This image was created using high dynamic range techniques.)

>*Caption text.* (U.S. Air Force photo illustration by Tech. Sgt. Donny Morales/Released) (This image was created using Instagram.)

>*Caption text.* (U.S. Marine Corps photo illustration by Gunnery Sgt. Chris Tryon/Released) (This image was manipulated using multiple filters, and dodging and burning techniques.)

>*Caption text.* (U.S. Coast Guard photo illustration by Petty Officer 1st Class Megan O'Brien/ Released) (This image was manipulated by adding a unit logo to the upper left hand of the frame.)

>*Caption text.* (DoD photo illustration by William F. Morgan/Released) (This image was manipulated by adding text at the top and bottom of the image.)

NOTE: The disclosure also should appear in the Public Release Instructions (PRI) field of the metadata. This demonstrates the releasing authority is aware of the manipulations in the image being sent to DIMOC.

>*References: DoDI 5040.02, Enclosure 10, Section 4*

>>*National Press Photographers Association (http://www.nppa.org/ethics)*

Examples of manipulations or illustrations requiring disclosure
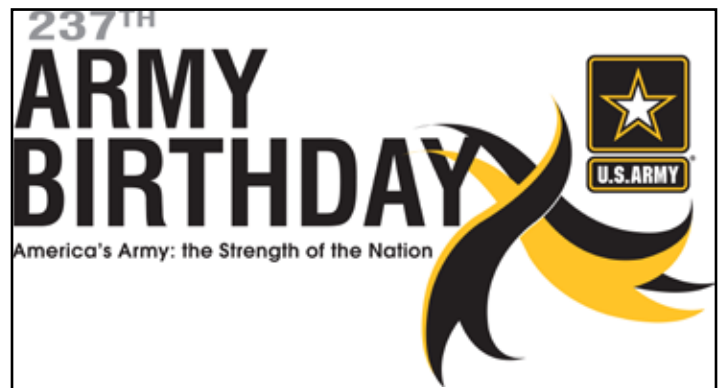

Panoramas (multiple shots stitched together)
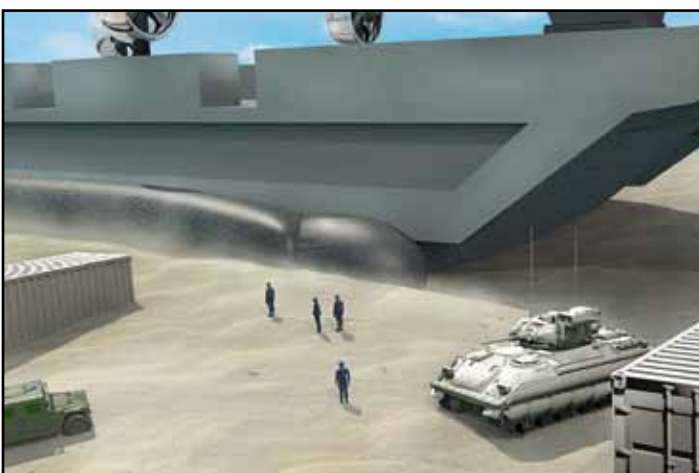

HDR images (detail showing "ghosting")

Graphics and logos (above and below)

Multiple exposures

Collages

Artist's renderings/drawings

Superimposed images/changed backgrounds

Chapter 9
Additional resources

The following publications are useful tools when writing captions for still or motion imagery. Use these sources for items not listed in this guide.

The Associated Press Stylebook, Associated Press, New York

DD Form 2537, *Visual Information Caption Sheet.*
http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd2537.pdf

DoD 4120.15-L, *Model Designation of Military Aerospace Vehicles.*
http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/412015l.pdf

Jane's All the World's Aircraft; Jane's Yearbooks, London, and Franklin Watts Inc., New York

Jane's Fighting Ships; Jane's Yearbooks, London, and Franklin Watts Inc., New York

JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary.* http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/

The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency.
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html

Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition, Wiley, Hoboken, N.J.
http://www.yourdictionary.com

Controlled Access Program Coordination Office (CAPCO) Register and Manual, March 30, 2012.
http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/FOIA/Public_CAPCO_Register%20and%20Manual%20v5.1.pdf

How to submit to DIMOC: http://www.defenseimagery.mil/learning/howto.html

DoD Style Guide: http://www.defenseimagery.mil/learning.html
Policies: http://www.defenseimagery.mil/learning/vipolicy.html
To obtain a VISION ID: https://vipro.defenseimagery.mil/

Grammar and Writing

Newsroom 101, AP style help: http://newsroom101.net/
AP Stylebook (login required)   http://www.apstylebook.com/
Poynter's News University: http://www.newsu.org/

Service-specific fact sheets:

Army
Equipment: https://peosoldier.army.mil/equipment
Fact file: http://www.army.mil/factfiles/

Navy
Equipment: http://www.navy.com/about/equipment.html
Fact file: http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact.asp

Air Force
Equipment: http://www.af.mil/information/factsheets/index.asp
Dictionary (AFDD 1-2):   http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/usaf/afdd1-2.pdf

Marine Corps
Equipment: http://www.marines.com/operating-forces/equipment

Coast Guard
Equipment: http://www.uscg.mil/datasheet/

References to non-DoD websites are provided as a service and do not constitute or imply endorsement of these organizations or their programs by the U.S. Department of Defense. DoD is not responsible for the content of pages found at these sites. URLs listed in this reference are current as of the date of publication.